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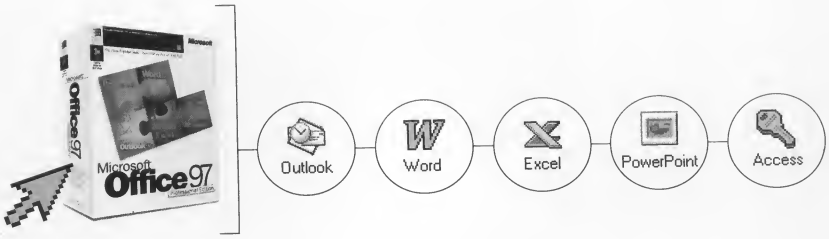

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With Microsoft® Outlook™ 98, we've raised a single, central place to take care of all the many and varied kinds of info that pour into your office every day—one place to look for e-mail, to-do lists, contact names and numbers, meetings and so on. Powerful e-mail tools let you use Outlook to presort your messages, automatically delete junk mail, and see the important stuff first. And Outlook lets you take advantage of just about any Internet server or e-mail system. The built-in calendar will find the right time for a meeting or remind you of your mom's birthday. Or, open a contact, click a button and you're ready to send e-mail. In other words, Outlook 98 takes a bunch of related tasks that once required a bunch of unrelated software and brings them together with tender, loving care. Outlook 98 is part of Microsoft Office 97—and you can download it free* at www.microsoft.com/outlook/now/.

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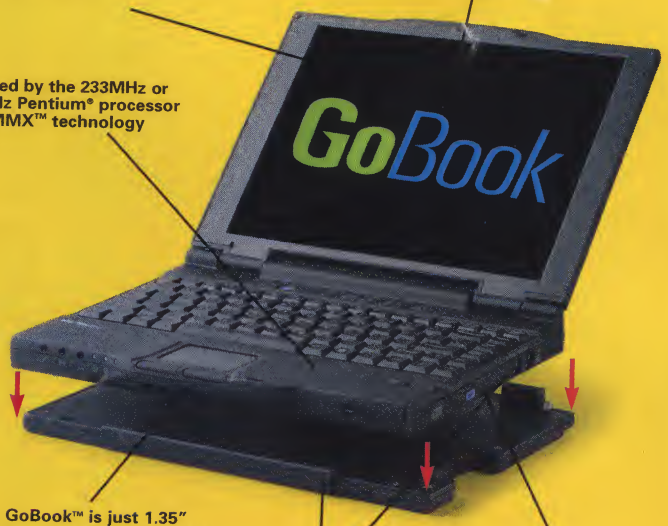

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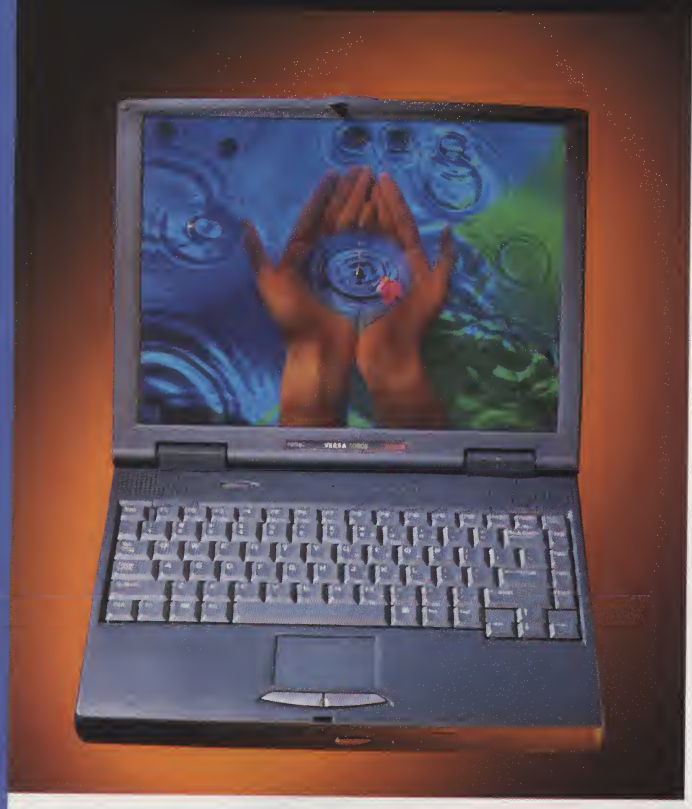

Versa 5000 Series Notebook

Everything you expect in a notebook except the weight.

The choice between weight and features is over. The Versa 5080X is the full-featured, no-compromise multimedia notebook. It's armed with a superfast Intel processor and a 13.3" XGA screen for vibrant images that will bring your work, and especially your multimedia presentations, to life. And all this power comes to you in one of the thinnest and most lightweight forms around to give you the ultimate in mobile computing.

"Thin is in, and NEC's Versa 5080, at 4.9 pounds and 1.5 inches thick, is a power user's full-featured laptop with a waifish form factor."

BYTE Magazine -Mar. 1998

Versa® 5080X

- 233MHz Pentium® processor with MMX™ technology
- 13.3" XGA Active-Matrix TFT Color Display
- 80MB EDO DRAM (144MB Maximum)
- 512KB L2 Pipeline Burst Cache
- 4.0GB Hard Drive
- Lithium Ion Battery
- SuperDisk™ 120MB Drive Pak for UltraSlim™ VersaBay™
- Modular UltraSlim VersaBay with NoStop Swap™ Technology Accepts SuperDisk 120MB Drive, 20X Maximum Variable-Speed CD-ROM Drive, 1.44MB Diskette Drive, and Weight-Saving Module (all included)
- PCI Bus Architecture with NeoMagic™ 128-Bit Graphics Accelerator
- Integrated 16-Bit Stereo Sound
- 32-Bit CardBus and Zoomed Video Support
- USB and 4Mbps Fast Infrared Ports
- Microsoft® Windows® 95
- 5 Pounds** and 1.5" Thin

Upgrades:

- 2nd Lithium Ion Battery, add $189
- Microsoft Windows NT® Workstation 4.0, add $99
- VersaPro™ Ballistic Nylon Carrying Case, add $89

$3999

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Versa 5080X

- 233MHz Pentium processor with MMX technology
- 13.3" XGA Active-Matrix TFT Color Display
- 32MB EDO DRAM (144MB Maximum)
- 512KB L2 Pipeline Burst Cache
- 2.1GB Hard Drive
- Lithium Ion Battery
- Modular UltraSlim VersaBay with NoStop Swap Technology Accepts 20X Maximum Variable-Speed CD-ROM Drive, 1.44MB Diskette Drive, and Weight-Saving Module (all included) or optional SuperDisk 120MB Drive
- PCI Bus Architecture with NeoMagic 128-Bit Graphics Accelerator
- Integrated 16-Bit Stereo Sound
- 32-Bit CardBus and Zoomed Video Support
- USB and 4Mbps Fast Infrared Ports
- Microsoft Windows 95
- 5 Pounds** and 1.5" Thin

Upgrades:

- Upgrade to 80MB RAM, add $399
- SuperDisk 120MB Drive Pak for UltraSlim VersaBay, add $199
- VersaPro Ballistic Nylon Carrying Case, add $89

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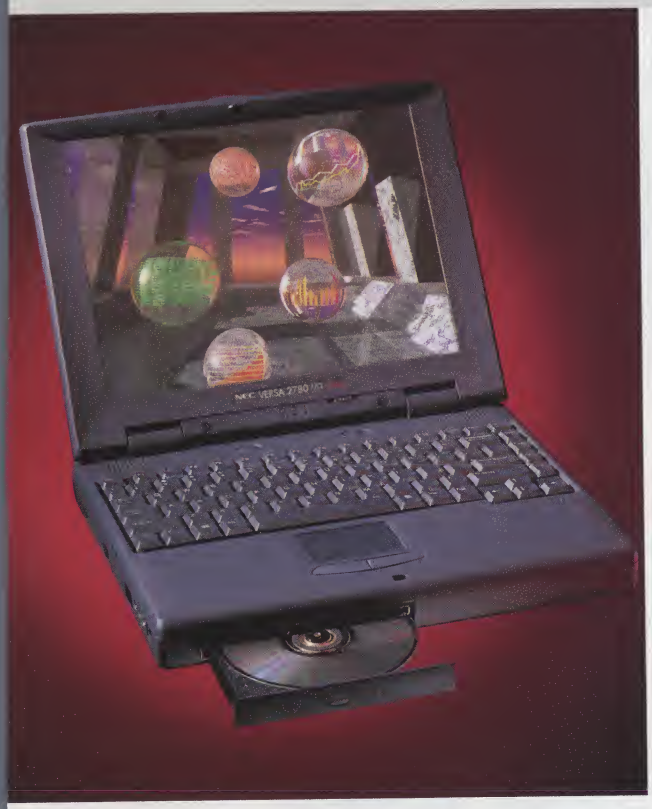

Versa 2700 Series Notebook

All-in-one convenience at a sensible price.

Don't let the fact that the Versa 2780MT notebook gives you true all-in-one convenience at an exceptional value fool you. It also gives you serious capabilities. Like being able to create multimedia presentations with full-motion, full-screen MPEG-1 video in 3-D stereo surround sound. And the features you need most, like a 20X CD-ROM, a vivid 12.1" true-to-life color screen and a 56Kbps* modem for blazing fast Internet connections.

"...the ideal mid-range laptop for those who don't want to compromise on performance, presentation or portability."

Portable Computing Direct Shopper -Mar. 1998

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- Stereo Speakers and Subwoofer with 3-D Surround Sound and Yamaha Wavetable
- 32-Bit CardBus and Zoomed Video Support
- Universal Serial Bus (USB) and 4Mbps Fast Infrared Ports
- Microsoft Windows 95, Microsoft Home Essentials™ including Word 97

Upgrades:

- ➤ Upgrade to 128MB RAM, add $499
- ➤ PowerXtender™ Airplane and Auto Adapter, add $89
- ➤ VersaPro Ballistic Nylon Carrying Case, add $89

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- 512KB L2 Pipeline Burst Cache
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- Integrated 56Kbps* Modem
- PCI Bus Architecture with NeoMagic 128-Bit Graphics Accelerator
- Stereo Speakers and Subwoofer with 3-D Surround Sound and Yamaha Wavetable
- 32-Bit CardBus and Zoomed Video Support
- Universal Serial Bus (USB) and 4Mbps Fast Infrared Ports
- Microsoft Windows 95, Microsoft Home Essentials including Word 97

Upgrades:

- ➤ Upgrade to 32MB RAM, add $129
- ➤ PortBar™ 2700 Port Replicator, add $159
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Top 200 Steals & Deals

The best or the bargain—which one should you buy? Find out in this exclusive guide to the editors' top picks in every major hardware, software, and Internet category. Plus money-saving secrets you don't want to miss! **116**

Best Hardware

Have it all: 400MHz screamers for under $3,500, portables that weigh less than your cell phone (and do more), eye-popping big-screen monitors, low-cost color scanners, and the high-speed modem you've been waiting for! **119**

Best Software

Hardware is sexy, but it's apps that get the job done. The inside line on the best business programs, finance managers that pay for themselves, and everything you need to look like a pro. Plus utilities, games, graphics, and other gotta-have-it software. **151**

Best Internet

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Why Wait for Film? Snap photos for your Web site and take instant shots of your kids in less time than you can say "Cheese." Plus a digital photo printer, a scanner for under $150, and everything you need to travel in style. **233**

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Technology is a race. Presenting the Official Pace Car.

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- PCI Wavetable Audio
- **U.S. Robotics x2 56Kbps* Winmodem**
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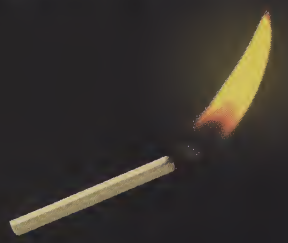

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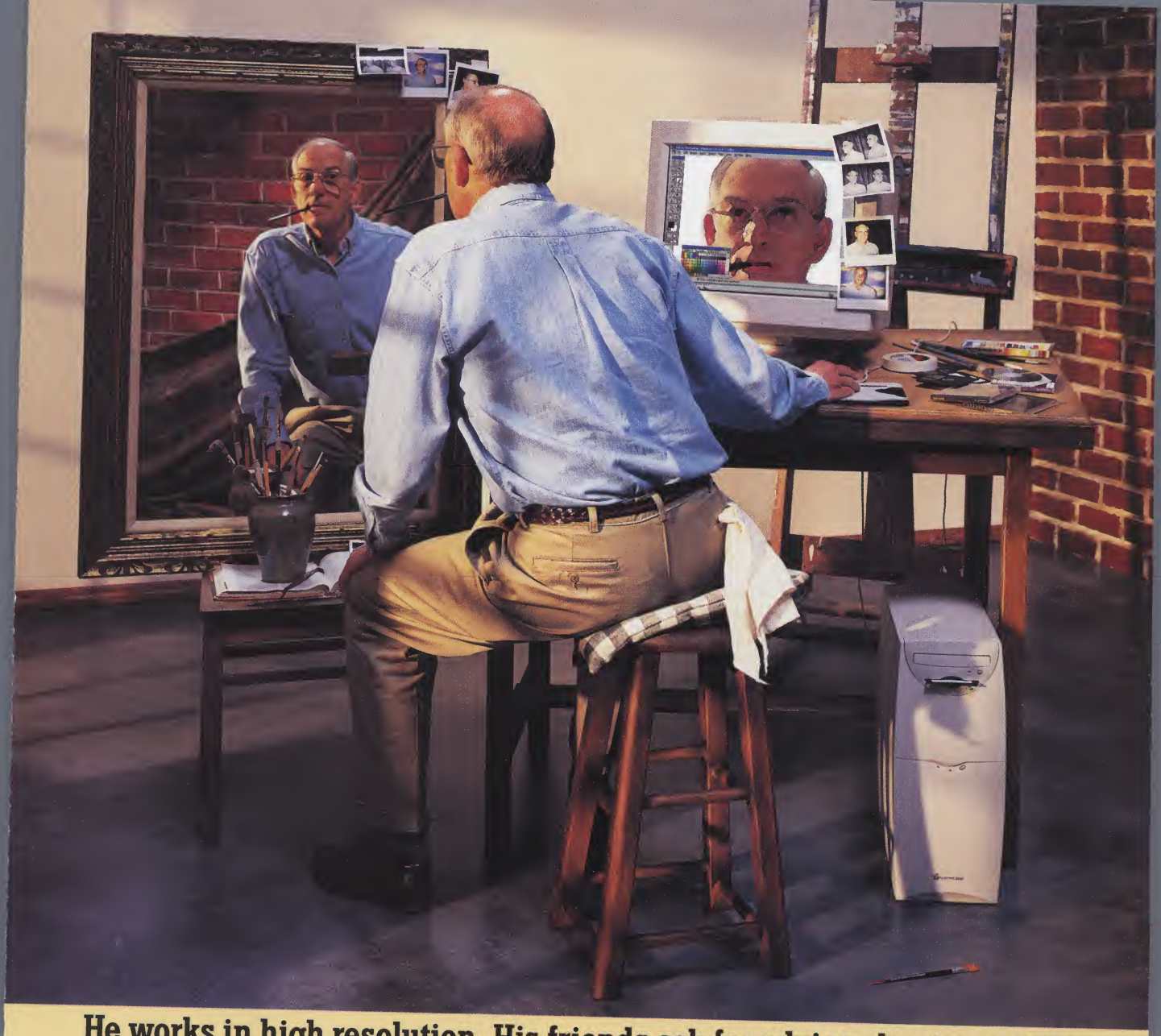

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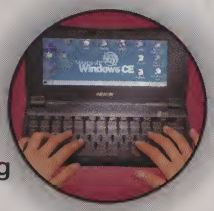

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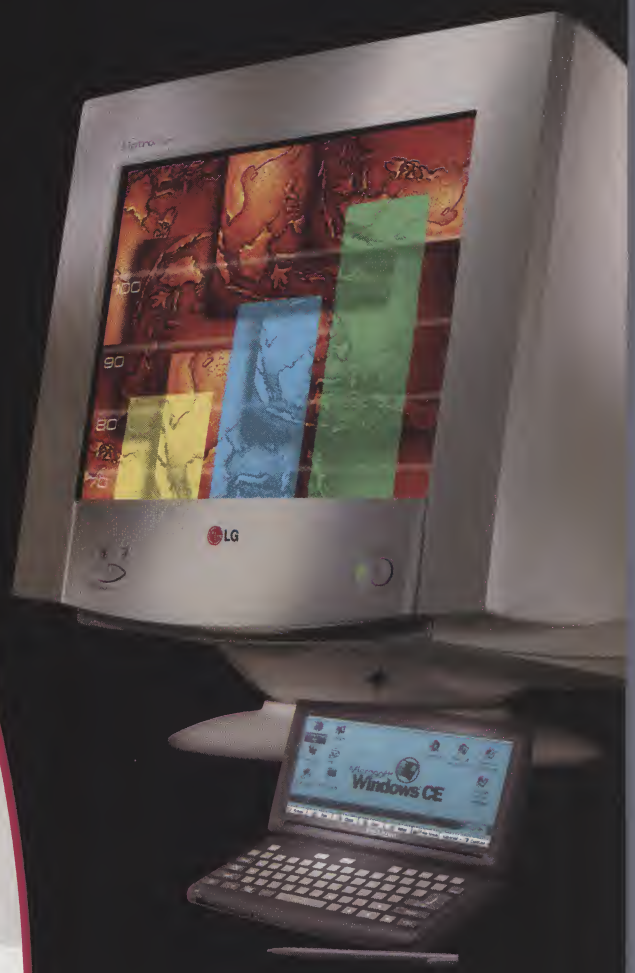

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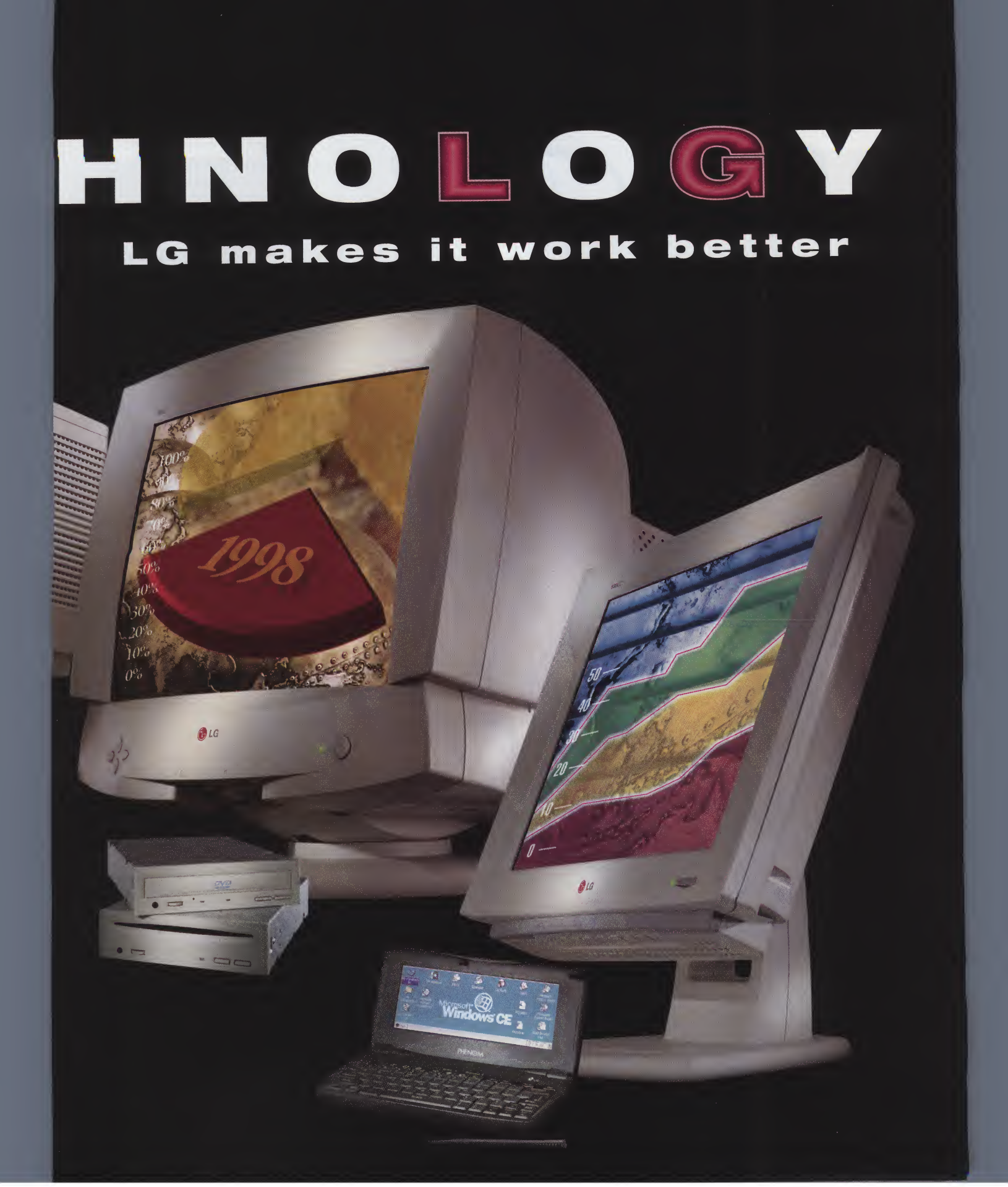
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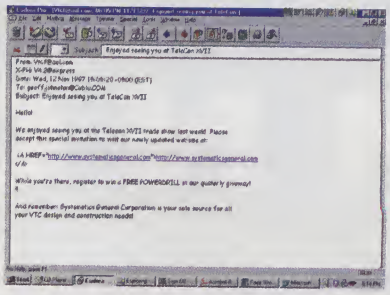

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INSIDER INFO

Staying Alive

I loved the April issue, especially "Undocumented PC Secrets" (page 132). It was great to read a magazine with an open mind on the subject of keeping an Internet connection alive—something ISPs take very seriously. My last provider kept kicking me off even though I set my mail reader to check for new mail every ten minutes. Thanks for recommending a better way of staying connected. RAS+95, downloadable at www.pccomputing.com, really works.

GARY LONG
VIA THE INTERNET

Glad to Help

The April issue was extremely informative—the best issue yet! As a computer technician for a large computer company, I appreciate articles like "Undocumented PC Secrets," which really help people. They make my job easier.

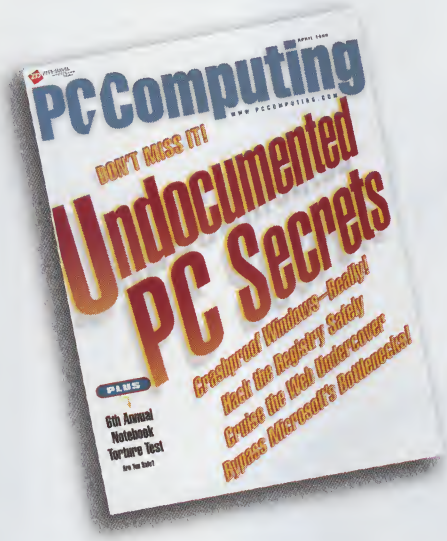
DONALD R. FLYNN
VIA THE INTERNET

Missing Verify Option

I've seen lots of *PC Computing* articles brimming with good advice. But when I read the "No More Missing Files" section (page 158) of April's "Undocumented PC Secrets," I thought it was too good to be true. Am I right to be skeptical? I can't find the Verify option on any Windows 95 setup option I've tried. Where did you find it?

WILL SUMMERS
VIA THE INTERNET

IF YOU DON'T SEE THE VERIFY OPTION—also called Restore Windows Files—when you run Windows 95 setup from within Win95, there's probably something out of whack in your SETUPLOG.TXT file. You'll find directions for setting things right in Microsoft Knowledge Base Article Q141841, found on the Web at http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q141/8/41.asp.



Tech-Support Trauma

Paul Somerson missed one clause in his Users' Bill of Rights: "Any product support person who makes a user feel like an idiot for calling tech support should be taken out back and shot" ("Freeze!" April, page 79). Too many users blame themselves—partly because of abusive tech support. It's frustrating enough to deal with stupid programs and recalcitrant hardware without being mentally abused over the phone. Usability is a long, uphill battle; we need all the help we can get from articles like Somerson's. Keep up the good work!

DON LAMMERS
VIA THE INTERNET

Somerson for Congress

In all my years of reading about and using computers, Paul Somerson's April column ("Freeze!") is the single most poignant column I've ever read. The Department of Justice should forget about its antitrust efforts and push for the enactment of Somerson's User Bill of Rights.

TOMMY MCNUTT
VIA THE INTERNET

Defending IS

In "Freeze!" (April), Paul Somerson accuses IS departments of compounding the PC-usability problem by not supporting new products. The simple truth is that IS tries to limit the release of new applications because they're so buggy. To avoid problems, IS departments provide lists of blessed applications that it can support. With all the junk out there, their ability to support even a fraction of it is amazing.

MARK MILLER
VIA THE INTERNET

Cold Blow

Paul Somerson's "Freeze!" (April) was a frustrating slap in the face. I'm a systems administrator, and I can tell from Somerson's tone that he'd be a problem user. He wants his PC to be crash-free, but he'd also like to have all the latest bells and whistles. With IS staffing shortages and cost-cutting measures, people should be thankful for the support they get. Believe it or not, I also want all the systems and software to work as advertised.

TONY HARRISON
VIA THE INTERNET

EXCUSE US, bud, but if it's a problem for you that users want to be crash-free and run current software, you're in the wrong job. **PS**

Bamboozled

I was flabbergasted by John C. Dvorak's "This Space For Sale" (April, page 83). I knew about the 3Com Park deal and quickly wrote it off as just a little piece of history being ruined by corporate greed. I even heard about Bill Gates wanting to register the Microsoft campus as an independent city. Good for him. But when I read about the possible renaming of historic cities like Dallas, Austin, and San Francisco, I became disgusted. And to rename Detroit—the birthplace of the great American auto industry—after Hyundai borders on treason.

JOSHUA HARTKE
VIA THE INTERNET

Stop the Presses

Interesting column, Mr. Dvorak ("This Space for Sale," April). I can't believe that companies can buy the rights to city names. Maybe the cities can convert their stationery and letterheads with the billion they get for the city-name deal, but what about the millions of taxpayers that will have to foot the bill for themselves?

ERLE GREER
VIA THE INTERNET

Fools Aplenty

Everyone knows that any column in the April issue of a magazine is potential foolery. John C. Dvorak had a nice bit going, and then he blew it with the *calendar, April,* and *nonsense* references in the last paragraph ("This Space for Sale"). He spoiled all the fun for those of us who were eagerly anticipating letters from enraged readers two months from now. I hope you'll be braver next April.

MICHAEL N. MARCUS
VIA THE INTERNET

Prophetic Prank?

I enjoyed John C. Dvorak's April Fools' column, "This Space for Sale." The sad thing is that it will probably come true in our lifetime. Ten or twenty years ago, who would have believed San Francisco's Candlestick Park would become 3Com Park? Is Jack Murphy rolling in his grave now that Qualcomm's advertising campaign has shamed San Diego's baseball legacy? Thanks, John, for your writing. It's always my favorite part of *PC Computing*.

TONY LEE
VIA THE INTERNET

Toyota, England

John C. Dvorak's April column ("This Space for Sale") is excellent—certainly the best I've seen this year. I was taken in until I reached "Laer Sisihtfoenon," which looked so odd that I read it backward. Here in the U.K., Toyota built a massive factory in the middle of Derbyshire. All the signs to it read "Toyota," rather than "Toyota Factory" or "Toyota Works." If ever the apocalypse should come, future archaeologists may wonder why so many people in the twentieth century drove cars named after a small Derbyshire village.

MIKE FARMER
VIA THE INTERNET

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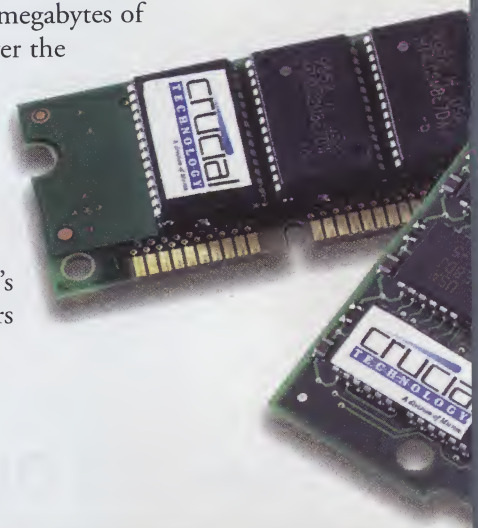

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Fine Print

Once again, Taylor & Jerome have described Net-shopping problems perfectly—except for one thing ("Selling Out," April, page 81). It's rare to find something on the Net that's cheaper than at a store. Many online stores tack on small fees that add up to an additional three to five dollars. To me, that's worse than standing in line behind someone with 50 coupons.

LISA SONNENBERG
VIA THE INTERNET

She Said, He Said?

I appreciate the point of Taylor & Jerome's "Selling Out" (April) but they contradict themselves. They initially say that online shopping sites must have "Quick, clean interfaces" to be successful. But then they state, "An ideal site would allow customers to view and rotate merchandise in 3-D space" while supplying "detailed information about a product." C'mon, guys. As we are all painfully aware, you can't have it all when it comes to PCs and the Internet.

JEROME SAGET
VIA THE INTERNET

CD-Right On

I really enjoyed April's CD-Ron ("Sim Pickin's," page 126). It's hysterical that Ron White has no clue what he's doing in many of the games he reviews—which is how a lot of us feel—but he still enjoys them. In his reviews, he tells readers precisely what they need to know when shopping for games. *PC Computing* and Ron White have just earned another reader. Keep it up!

PAUL BRANNON
VIA THE INTERNET

Survival of the Fittest

Bravo! I don't write letters to magazines, but in the case of the April *PC Computing*, I had to. The issue is what a computer magazine should be: a perfect survival manual. After 32 years in the computer business, I've begun assembling a comprehensive computer manual of sorts, and the April issue could fill many chapters of it. Thanks a million!

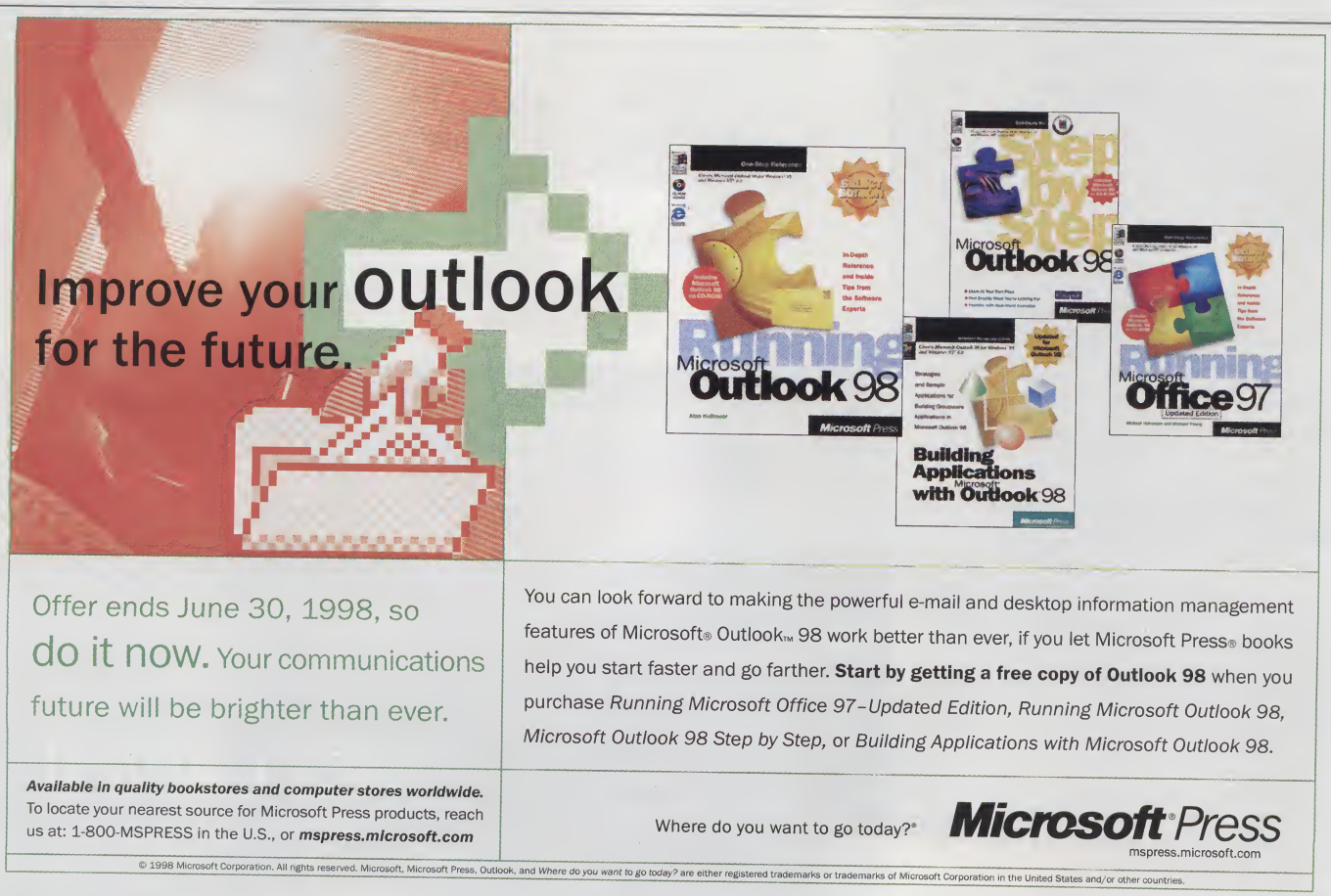
WALDO L. HAMILTON
VIA THE INTERNET

For the Record

Tympani Development's NetAttache Pro 2.5 is a pull client and offline browser that includes an option to disable an intermediary link to pages that haven't been previously downloaded ("Internet in a Briefcase," April, page 122).

The list price for the Iomega Jaz 2GB's cartridges is $169 each or $449 for a three-pack ("Pocket-size Hard Drive," April, page 96).

GOD COMPLEX OR IMAGE PROBLEM—WHAT'S REALLY WRONG WITH MICROSOFT? Send your thoughts about this and other subjects to Mail, *PC Computing*, 50 Beale St., 13th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105, or via the Internet at PCCmail@zd.com. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



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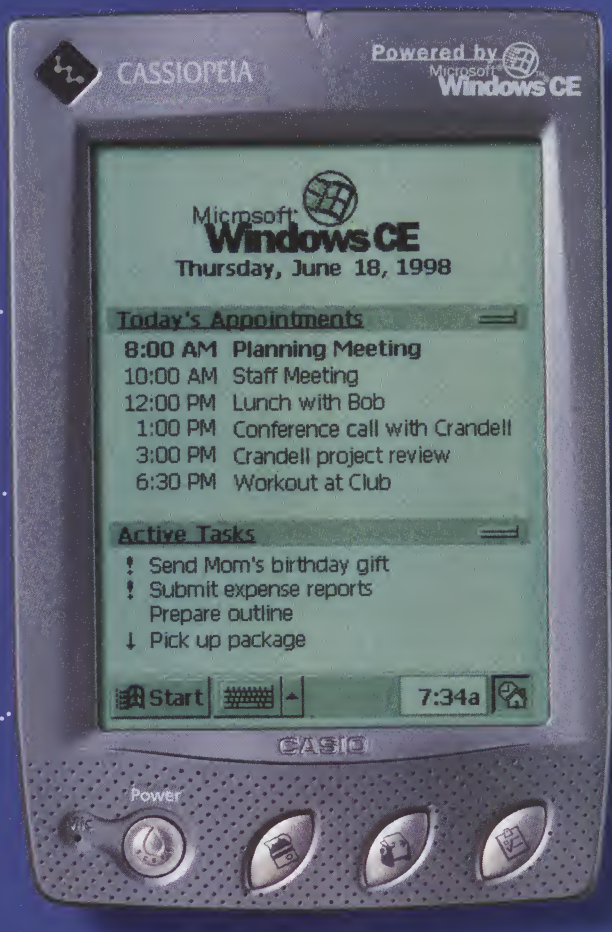

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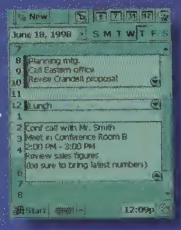

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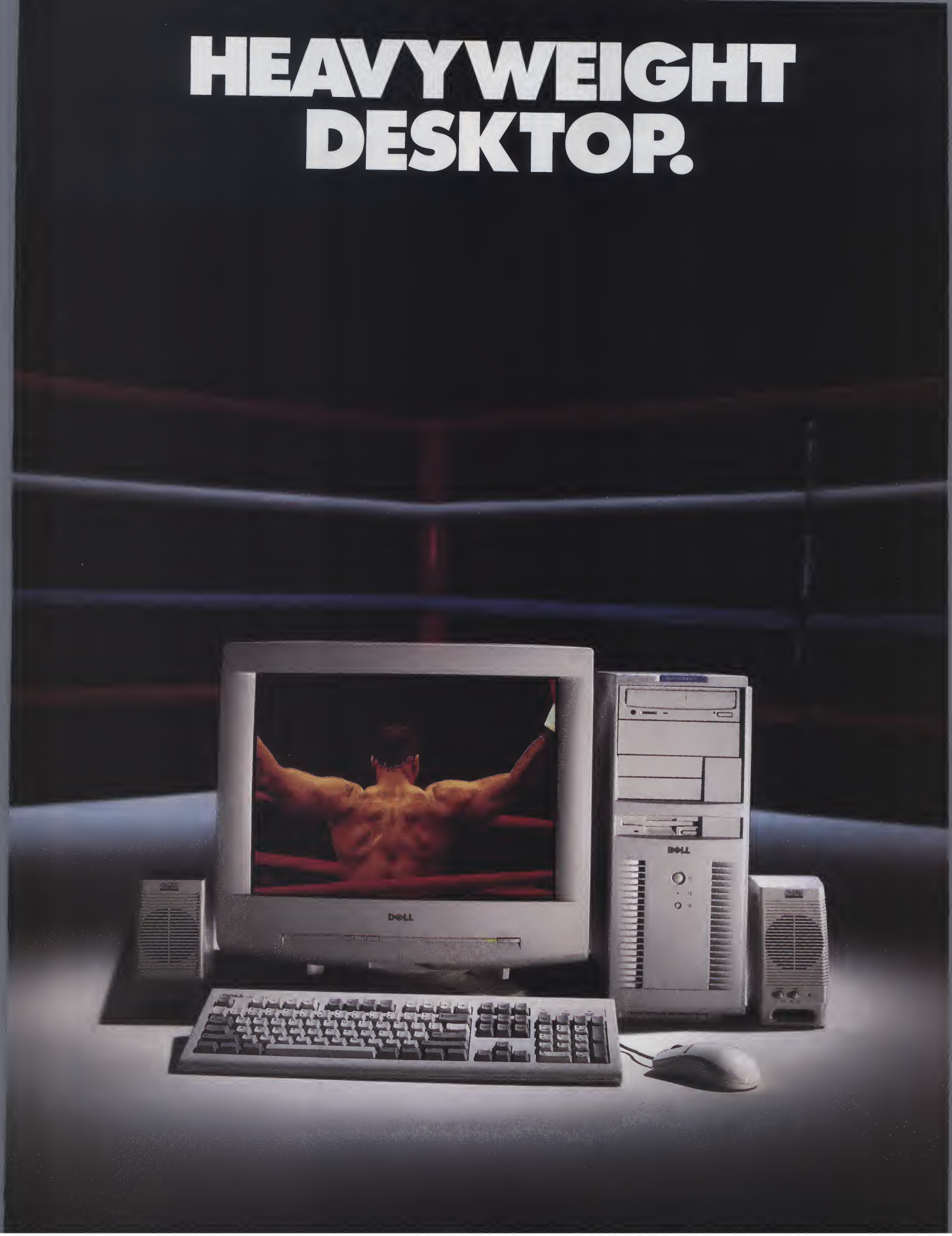
Infolink 227 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

HEAVYWEIGHT DESKTOP.



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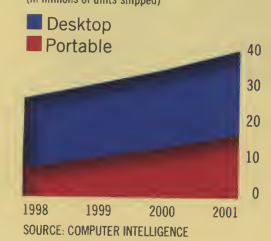
MMX™ intel inside pentium® II PROCESSOR

Pulse

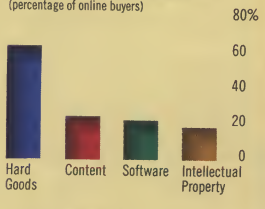
PC Shipments
(in millions of units shipped)



SOURCE: COMPUTER INTELLIGENCE

Nowhere but Up: Too many PCs? No way. The number of PCs shipped in the United States will continue to climb through the year 2001.

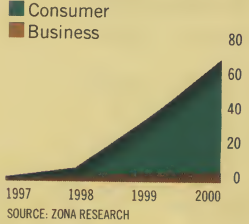
What Sells Online?
(percentage of online buyers)



SOURCE: INTERNATIONAL DATA CORP.

Shopping List: Hard goods like books and audio CDs are popular online purchases—64 percent of consumers say they've bought these products on the Internet.

Network Computers
(in millions of units shipped)



SOURCE: ZONA RESEARCH

Homemade: Network computers will make the biggest splash in the consumer market, with an estimated 70 million units sold by the year 2000.

SNEAK PREVIEW

The Rebirth of Office

If you had a dollar for every time a corporate IS director complained about Microsoft Office 97, you'd end up with a bank account that would impress even Bill Gates. Despite its overwhelming market share, Office 97 has accumulated an impressive list of gripes: It's buggy. It's impossible to manage. It doesn't integrate easily into intranets. And then there's that damn paper clip. . . .

With last summer's service release and a series of patches to fix a number of embarrassing Excel and Word glitches, Microsoft has done a reasonable job of dealing with Office 97's bugs, and users love its seemingly endless list of features. But corporate critics have demanded a complete overhaul. In a series of recent background briefings, Microsoft unveiled its solution, currently code-named Office 9.

At the heart of the Office upgrade is a new HTML-based companion file format. Users will be able to choose between native Office 97 formats (for the best performance and the most efficient storage) and an industry-standard format that other users can view in a Web browser. Microsoft promises seamless conversion between the two formats through Office-specific tags that use Extensible Markup Language (XML).

Other Web-centric Office enhancements due in the upcoming version include document management and collaboration features that let coworkers share comments and revisions. They can publish Office documents to a Web workspace and add comments to a news server, then view and edit the document and comments in a single browser window. Three new ActiveX components will let users work

Naked Truth: The next version of Microsoft Office features Web-based extensions that will integrate with Internet Explorer and smart desktop customization.

ILLUSTRATION BY PETER ALAN GOULD

UPDATES BEST BETS AND BARGAINS

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with charts, pivot tables, and other objects in a browser.

A new installation engine should make it easier to set up and manage Office applications on PCs and Windows terminals, especially on networks using NT Server 5.0. For this upgrade, Microsoft promises to consolidate all Office configuration details in a single location, so users can run Office from a server or transfer an installation to a new PC without losing customized settings. You can expect a host of usability improvements, too, including more automatic document-creation and editing features. The most controversial changes will customize the Office interface as you work, rearranging toolbar buttons and menu items to reflect your working habits and to place oft-used features at your fingertips.

So when can you expect this upgrade? Don't hold your breath. Adding new document formats is a daunting task that requires mapping every Office feature to an XML tag. The upgrade also depends heavily on the development of other Microsoft technologies, including Windows NT 5.0 and Internet Explorer 5.0. IE5 will probably be ready before the end of this year, but the NT upgrade has been delayed until the first half of 1999.

First beta copies of Office 9 should appear this summer, but corporate critics of Office 97 won't have reason to celebrate until well after the New Year. **EB**

Contributors to Pulse:
ED BOTT, KYLA K. CARLSON, *and* RICH SCHWERIN.
Edited by JULIE POLITO.

Creative Sparks

If you're **creating graphics for the Web,** get Macromedia's **Fireworks,** a tool designed for Web graphics creation and production. Fireworks lets you **tweak graphics** and **preview the results** as you go. With both vector drawing and bitmap imaging tools, you can **edit without leaving the program.** And live effects like drop shadows and embossing **change on the fly** as you alter your text or graphics. **JP**

Fireworks / Macromedia / (800) 457-1774 / $299 est. street price / *Enter 846 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

19-Inch Monitors

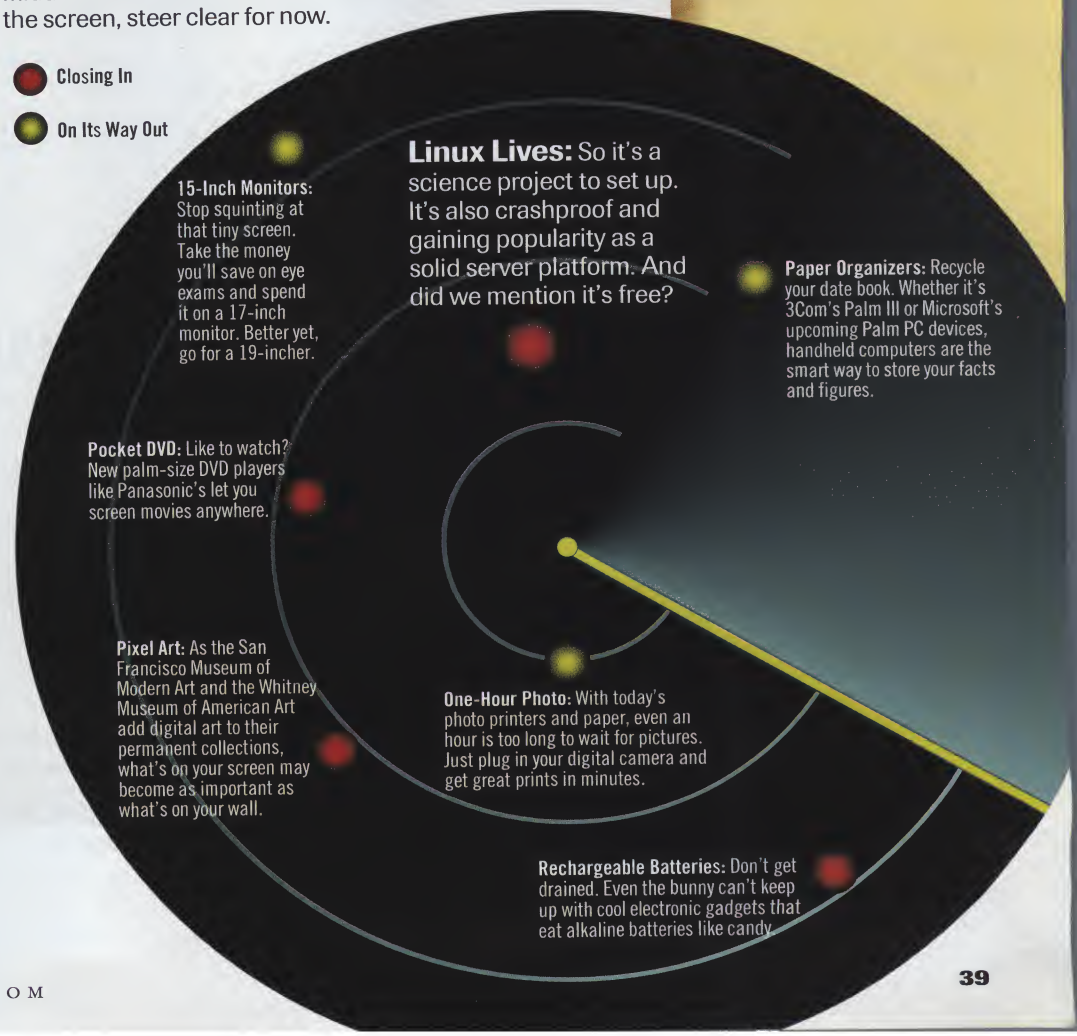
Want lots of onscreen space but don't have the room or budget for a 21-inch monitor? A 19-inch monitor offers a great view, and saves space and money. Here are the cheapest 19-inch monitors we could find as of April 1.

Product	Price
ADI MicroScan 6P *Egghead Computer* *(800) 344-4323*	$577
PiXie Technologies Model 995 *CompUSA Direct* *(800) 294-4727*	$615
Princeton Graphic EO90 *NECX* *(800) 808-3375*	$675
Mag Innovision DJ800 *Computer Discount Warehouse* *(800) 849-4239*	$679
Digital Research Color Monitor *PC Mall* *(800) 863-3282*	$700

Enter InfoLink numbers at www.pccomputing.com/infolink: Egghead Computer, *848;* CompUSA Direct, *847;* NECX, *850;* Computer Discount Warehouse, *851;* PC Mall, *849.*

RADAR THE OTHER OS, FAST PHOTOS

What's on the scope? If a blip is near or moving toward the middle of the radar screen, check it out. If it's moving off the screen, steer clear for now.

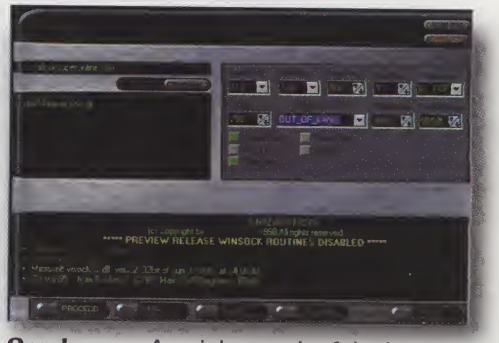


Stop Hack Attacks

Have you been Boinked lately? Any NT machine with a direct connection to the Internet is vulnerable to denial-of-service attacks from online vandals, and they're far more common than you think. Symptoms include inexplicably slow server performance, servers that stop responding for no good reason, and mysterious crashes.

Don't confuse denial-of-service attacks with attempts to hack into systems and steal data. A competent thief hopes you'll never notice that anything's missing; online vandals make their attacks at random, looking for servers and workstations they can shut down for sport.

Unix administrators have been dealing with this nonsense for years, but NT's problems began in earnest in early 1997. The most damaging recent attack hit thousands of machines around the world in early March of this year. Unfortunately, easy-to-follow recipes for the most common attacks are widely available, and it doesn't take a degree in computer science to inflict major damage.



Crashware: A quick search of the Internet found this polished application designed to crash a Net-connected Windows PC.

Winnuke, one of the most common attacks, sends out-of-band data to TCP port 139, causing Windows NT to crash with a STOP 0x0000000A message (the dreaded Blue Screen of Death). The Land attack is a form of "SYN flooding," in which the attacking machine bombards a host computer with bogus connection request packets. Eventually, the machine under attack slows to a crawl while it tries in vain to respond to the barrage of messages.

Teardrop sends a pair of fragmented datagrams to a host machine; when reassembled, the corrupt packet forces Windows to allocate kernel memory until it slows, hangs, or crashes. And Boink, Bonk, Newtear, and a host of other attacks are variations on the Teardrop attack, usually in response to preliminary Microsoft fixes.

NT Service Pack 3 will not protect you from these attacks; you'll need to update your system. Tearfix, described in Knowledge Base article Q179129, incorporates virtually all fixes in one patch. (Service Pack 4 should include this and other fixes.) You can get full details from www.microsoft.com/security. If you're responsible for an NT machine with a direct connection to the Internet, do it today.

ED BOTT

NT TOOLS

NT SERVICE PACK 4 DUE SOON

Our sources at Microsoft tell us to expect Service Pack 4 soon. The latest update should roll up all the security updates and bug fixes currently available as hotfixes to Service Pack 3. That's good news for frazzled administrators trying to make sense of the bewildering array of patches—at last count, there were more than 30 SP3 updates, many of them supplanted by later fixes. Get up-to-the-minute news from www.microsoft.com/windows/NTW/info/ntupdates.htm.

SECURITY ENCYCLOPEDIA

Want a no-holds-barred set of instructions for securing your NT network? The SANS Institute (www.sans.org), a nonprofit research and education organization, has assembled a 36-page guide called *Windows NT Security: Step-by-Step*. It's a cooperative effort from security experts at 77 large organizations, ranging from banks and Fortune 500 companies to military and government agencies. The experts combined their security-tuning techniques, and their work yielded a prescription that includes more than 80 actions, spanning eight phases from installing the machine to ongoing security monitoring. At $19, it's an unbeatable bargain.

BRIEFS NT NEWS AND TRENDS

New Support Options

A change in Microsoft's support policy should make it easier to get up and running with NT Workstation 4.0. Previously, anyone installing NT WorkStation was entitled to no-charge support for two incidents; after that, you were forced to pay for each call. The new policy gives users 90 days of unlimited free support (but not over toll-free lines). There's no change in the policy for NT Server 4.0.

Securing Win95 Workstations

Unlike NT, Windows 95 doesn't include a formal program for issuing service packs, hotfixes, or security updates. So does that mean Windows 95 workstations are more vulnerable to denial-of-service attacks? Not necessarily. In March, Microsoft released a Winsock 2 update that repairs all known security holes in the Windows 95 TCP/IP stack. (The 192K patch is available from www.microsoft.com/windows95/info/ws2.htm.) This update works with the original retail release of Windows 95 as well as OSR2, and you can safely install it on a system that includes other security updates. Windows 98 contains all TCP/IP updates and is not vulnerable to current denial-of-service attacks.

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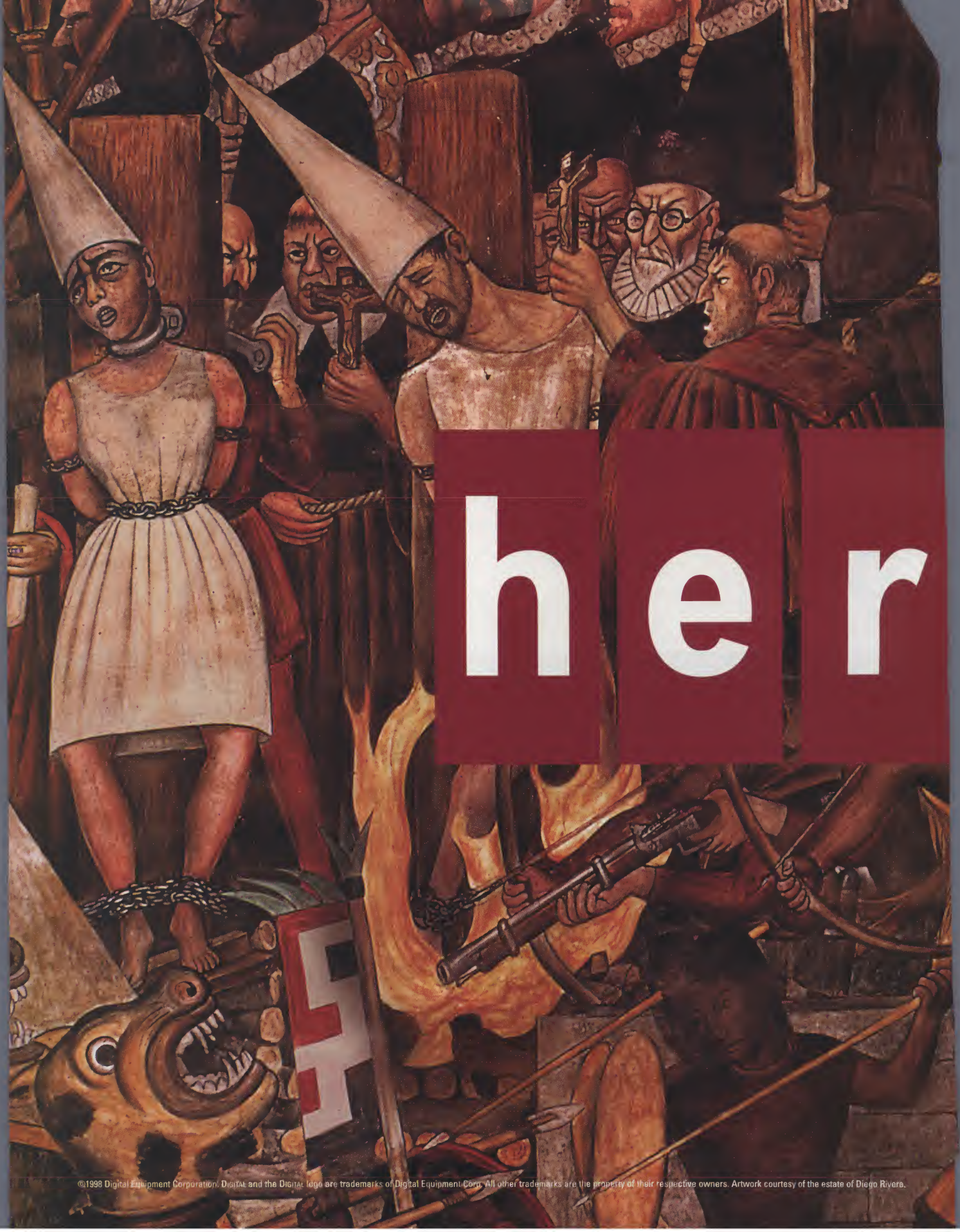

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	VisionMaster 502 (19.5" VIS)	0.27mm/dp	110khz	1800 x 1440@74hz	$1,199
	VisionMaster 501 (19.5" VIS)	0.27mm/dp	96khz	1600 x 1200@75hz	$1,139
19"	VisionMaster 450 (18.0" VIS)	0.26mm/dp	102khz	1600 x 1200@80hz	$799
17"	VisionMaster Pro 17 (15.9" VIS)	0.25mm/AG	92khz	1600 x 1200@74hz	$579
	VisionMaster 17ES (15.7" VIS)	0.26mm/dp	86khz	1600 x 1200@69hz	$569
	VisionMaster 17 (15.7" VIS)	0.26mm/dp	86khz	1600 x 1200@69hz	$488
15"	VisionMaster 350 (13.7" VIS)	0.28mm/dp	69khz	1280 x 1024@60hz	$248

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MW Editors' Choice — *Six Time Winner* Jan 1997, Feb 1997, March 1997, April 1997, May 1997, June 1997 VisionMaster Pro 21

PC Magazine Editors' Choice — October 7, 1997 VisionMaster Pro 17

Cadalyst Labs 4½ Star Rating 1998 — March 1997 VisionMaster Pro 21

PC World Best Buy — *Six Time Winner* July 1996, Jan 1997, March 1997, July 1997, Sept 1997, Jan 1998 VisionMaster Pro 17 April 1998 VisionMaster 450

Infolink 129 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Vroooom!!

Think we live in fast times? Maybe compared to the bleak days before the industrial revolution. Back then it took months to cross the U.S. Or send information from one side of the planet to the other. Napoleon's army moved at the same speed as Hannibal's. But that was when horsepower meant a sweaty animal, not the size of the engine in your Camry. With today's technology, the sky's the limit, right? Nope. Truth is we've hit a wall. In 1958 Pan Am's new Boeing 707 could fly at around 600 mph. Today's newest 777s travel at about the same speed. At the turn of the century, New York Central's steam-powered Empire State Express did 100 mph. Today's Metroliners are only 25 mph faster. When turnpikes and interstates began appearing a few decades ago, cars cruised them at 60 to 70 mph. Today ditto.

Not So Fast The U.S. is a terrible laggard. French and British Concordes routinely travel at Mach 2. France's TGV (Train à Grande Vitesse) recently hit 320 mph. German drivers angrily flash you over to the slow lane for piddling along at less than 150 mph, and even in France the motorway speed limit is 81 mph.

What kind of crazy screwed-up world is it when the *French* kick our butts with trains, planes, and automobiles?

In this country the technology's OK but the culture isn't. We could easily have Autobahn speeds on our interstates, but the safety Nazis, car-hating enviro pukes, and eat-their-young insurance companies won't let it happen. And besides, as a sop to the lowest common denominator, states will give driver's licenses to anyone. As a result, speed limits have to be choked down to handle the half-blind grannies and brain-dead lowlife Dogpatch greaseballs in crab-walking '60s junkpiles who clog our roads.

Nobody in the U.S. cares about trains, and our airlines rely on decrepit flying Greyhounds, wedging us into soiled, smelly seats designed for jockeys, runts, and Chihuahuas, and placating us with bowdlerized box office flops and plastic trays of Purina passenger chow that prisoners would riot over.

We do care about our PCs, however. But here in the business computing world we've hit a wall too.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID PERRY

Paul Somerson

What kind of crazy **screwed-up world** is it when the ***French*** **kick our butts** with trains, planes, and cars?

We're victims of the Big Graphical Hoax. Microsoft continually crows about its sleek graphical Windows interface. Folks, it's just DOS with the corners rounded off and a bunch of colorful icons sprinkled on. The only business graphics most of us ever see are dancing paperclips, a cheesy gimmick that appeals only to bonehead Teletubbies fans.

If you're a mainstream user, when's the last time you incorporated anything really graphical into a memo, presentation, or report? Not that we don't want to. But the tools they give us are blunt instruments. Even something basic like dropping in a photo with runaround text, or animating a bar graph to show growth, is impossibly difficult for most users.

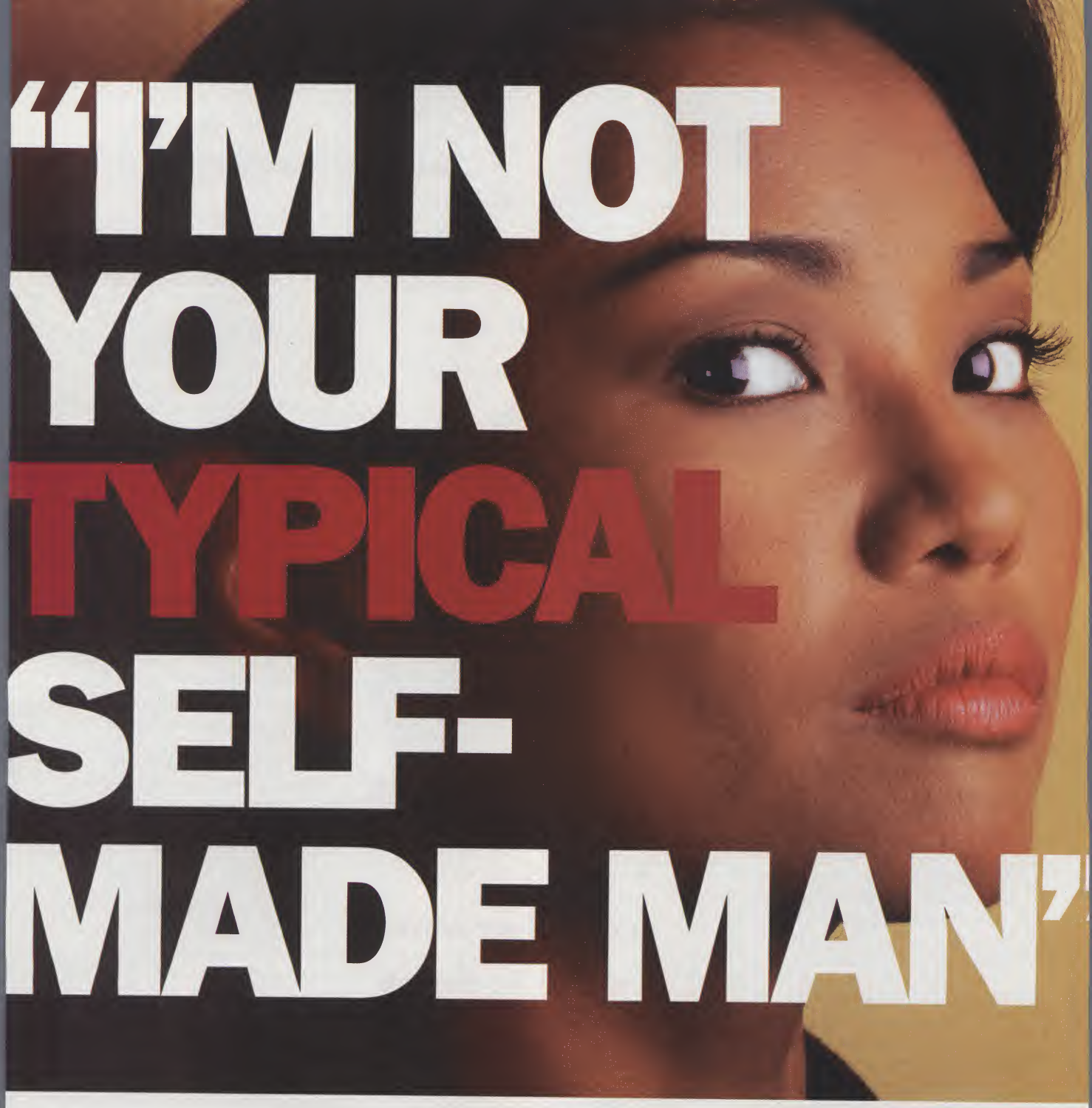
And god forbid you want to edit a video clip or a sound effect for a presentation. You might as well try taking out your own gall bladder.

Snore As a result, most memos are lifeless, most reports gray and boring, and most presentations instantly sleep inducing, no matter how many goofy wipes and transitions are slapped on. You don't need fast processors for this. You do for decent speech recognition, or games, or hotsy-totsy vaporware like Microsoft's Chrome (its DirectX multimedia XML extravaganza requiring a 350MHz Pentium II with AGP).

But not for business. Intel is hyping an 800MHz Merced chip, and IBM has a CPU that supposedly runs at a gigahertz. But on these glorified text-based systems we're all running, it's overkill. Yes, proportional-spaced fonts are great, and screen savers or Web JPEGs offer a little color, but this isn't exactly a graphical revolution.

Gutsy CPUs are nice, but we need powerful business-oriented graphics software that you don't need to be a graphics pro to use. And it can't happen fast enough.

E-mail somerson@zd.com



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Classified

Our eyes met through the window. I knew it was destiny moments before you screamed and called the police. Call me or post my bail. P.S. I have your dog. (Click here to reply.) Don't laugh. Classified ads and the Internet go together like a car salesman and a greasy handshake. Sorry if no one wants puppies from your cocker spaniel when you advertise free mutts in your local paper. Try posting scanned photos of the odd-looking pups on the Web—or even short video clips. Hearts will melt. Your phone will ring.

The same is true for that "partially restored" Edsel you're trying to unload, that "fixer-upper" your brother-in-law talked you into buying, or your own face when you're hawking your services as an actor or an escort. After all, there's a buyer for everything.

Not convinced? Classified ads rained some $16.6 billion into the coffers of print publishers last year. They account for roughly 40 percent of an average newspaper's revenue. But newspaper readership has been declining for years. Paper and ink cost publishers far more than disk space. And the opportunities for interactive and one-to-one marketing on the Web make print advertising as appealing as cold oatmeal.

Let's put that in terms we all understand: Online classified spending is expected to jump to $928 million by 2001, up from just $69 million last year. It's a gold mine.

Help Wanted For starters, online ads are more efficient than the print variety. As soon as an item sells, you can yank the ad. When an item *doesn't* sell, you can reduce the price—immediately. The Web lets you tailor your ads to meet the market as you go.

Buyers, on the other hand, get to blast through thousands of online classified ads without the eyestrain and exasperation that result from tiny print and poorly organized listings. Your local paper may have a Sports Car heading . . . somewhere. Better online classifieds let you narrow your search to Ferrari, Dino, '65 to '69, under $20K. Then they scan thousands of ads.

In fact, auto listings accounted for more than $4 billion of the money spent on classifieds last year. Web sites such as Auto-By-Tel (www.autobytel.com) are sucking business away from newspapers by offering information from more than 2,000 dealers across the country. Even Microsoft wants some of the action. The company's carpoint.com includes new and used-car listings, car reviews, and pricing. Dealers sell roughly $200 million of vehicles from the site every month.

Taylor & Jerome

Online **classified** spending is expected to hit **$928 million** by the year 2001. It's a **gold mine.**

Real estate is quickly joining this party. Realtor.com lists about 85 percent of *all* homes for sale in the United States. HomeSeekers.com presents its ads in Spanish and English, and features 360-degree views of some listings. CyberHomes.com provides street-level mapping and the ability to receive select new listings via e-mail.

Then there are personal ads. These range from free listings such as those found at Yahoo and America Online, to subscription services such as Match.Com, which plays cupid for upscale professionals. Love@AOL on America Online features 24-hour chat rooms and a gallery of over 50,000 ads with photos—the largest collection anywhere. It's now easier to shop for love online than to buy cantaloupes at your local grocery. Why would anyone bother with printed personals?

Fine Print Newspapers and other print media aren't taking this sitting down. Some are creating their own Internet sites. Others are pooling their ads for jobs, real estate, and merchandise into online services. Classified Ventures—a partnership among newspaper publishers Tribune, Times Mirror, and Washington Post—plans to tap its backers' ten newspapers for just such a site.

But it may be too little too late. Free alternatives already populate the Web. And newspapers aren't the only losers where classified ads are concerned. Brokers and merchants are also losing their cut. Who needs a headhunter when you can scour 100,000 job listings with a click of your mouse?

What conventional newspapers have failed to realize is that classified ads are *content.* Often as not, shoppers drop in solely for the sales. Web entrepreneurs need to figure out how not to make the same mistakes. Classified ads will increase the number of hits to your site, so you can then raise the rates you charge for banner ads. Or maybe you should get a cut in any sale that results from the free classifieds on your site. You tell us. Send your thoughts to taylor&jerome@zd.com.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID PERRY

DON'T BE A SUCKER

For a clever headline. For a cute mascot. For a catchy jingle. Instead, try simply looking at the product. Look at how it's built, what it costs, and how it's supported. That's what really matters, and those are the criteria by which we judge every system we build. Perhaps that's why Micron was just ranked first among all PC vendors in customer satisfaction by *PC Week* readers. Compare the numbers for yourself, because a better desktop is the only thing you should be buying.

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PC MAGAZINE EDITORS' CHOICE — Millennia Xku Sept 97

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Infolink 103 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Apocalypse When?

If we're to believe the news, the year 2000 problem will create havoc throughout the world. For those unfamiliar with the potential impact of Y2K, let me summarize. Many older computer programs, operating systems, and even embedded products have always used two digits to calculate the date—for example, 75,76,77 means 1975, 1976, and 1977. When the year 2000 arrives, suddenly we go from 99 to 00, or what is actually the computer equivalent of the year 1900.

John C. Dvorak

Overnight, any program code that makes a calculation based on the date will be dealing with minus 100 years instead of a one-day increment. The calculation will fail or give an erroneous result. This mistake may cause a tremendous financial hit for someone. Big corporations and government agencies like the Social Security Administration will send people the wrong checks—or no checks at all.

Domino Effect The situation will not be easily corrected and many believe it will collapse the economy. This will be worsened by municipal systems that will cut off people's gas, light, and water since they haven't paid their bill for 100 years. On their way to correct this mistake, the public will find itself in massive gridlock because many of the controllers running the traffic signals will fail. Dams will overflow, drowning millions of people on their way to the corporate headquarters to demand their money. Those who manage to arrive will find the buildings dark since the backup generators won't work. The elevators will be stuck between floors because the controllers can't make heads or tails out of the 00 date, which means "off."

All the new car computers that monitor engines with a real-time computer system have date stamping that will fail at midnight, making it impossible to start the car. TVs will work at home, but the computerized systems at the broadcasting centers will fail so nothing except channel 70 UHF in Gnaw Bone, Indiana, which uses antique gear, will be able to broadcast. Food riots will break out as flashlight-carrying maniacs ransack darkened stores with automatic doors that don't work. But the cops will not be able to stop the rioting because police and fire dispatch systems won't work.

All babies will be **mutants,** all women bald, and **zombies** will walk the earth. This is **the end.**

As computer scheduling fails, the food distribution system will fall apart. The homeless will flock to the farmlands looking for food only to be butchered as trespassers, their bodies left to rot. Carrion will abound. Disease will spread from the rotting corpses and be transferred to the cities by packs of wild dogs.

Cougars, mountain lions, and rabid skunks will roam the city streets attacking whatever they can. People will shoot at the animals in the darkness and end up killing each other.

Eve of Destruction Then things will get really bad. Nuclear fail-safe systems around the world will die, guidance controls will fail, and the missiles will fly, exploding in a random pattern all over the globe. Bombs hitting the North Pole will melt the ice caps, causing the flooding and destruction of all coastal cities. Sharks will swim the warm waters running through downtown San Francisco, feasting on the Armani-clad venture capitalists and lawyers. Dormant volcanos will be triggered. Earthquakes will bring down all the buildings in all the cities, crushing the public in glass shard. Nuclear holocaust will lead to martial law and vigilantism. Containment systems for biological and chemical systems will fail and horrible diseases spread rapidly everywhere. All babies will be mutants. All women bald. True zombies will walk the earth. This is more than economic collapse. It's the end of civilization as we know it.

Then again, the upshot of Y2K could be nothing but a series of funny incidents laughingly reported on the nightly news. I'm banking on the latter thesis, although I do have a small supply of water just in case.

The data gathered by Computer Intelligence and other research firms suggests that most large companies and the government are on top of the year 2000 problem. It's the small businesses that likely haven't considered Y2K—including end users like you and me.

So what can we really expect? Probably a glut of skilled programmers on the market who'd been working on the problem for the past few years. They'll need a job.

E-mail pccdvorak@zd.com

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID PERRY

[1]MHz denotes microprocessor internal clock speed only; other factors may also affect application performance. [2]Estimated reseller price to end users for model 8651-RMO (rack) and -TMO (tower). Certain features described on the right are available for an additional charge. Actual reseller prices may vary. [3]Based on published TPC-C results of 11,078 tpmc as of 4/8/98.TPC and TPC-C are registered trademarks of Transaction Processing Performance Council.IBM product names are trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation. Microsoft, Windows and Windows NT are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. Intel Inside and Pentium are registered trademarks and MMX is a trademark of Intel Corporation. © 1998 IBM Corp. All rights reserved.

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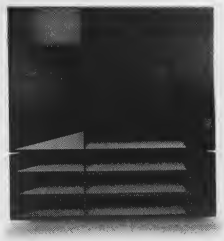

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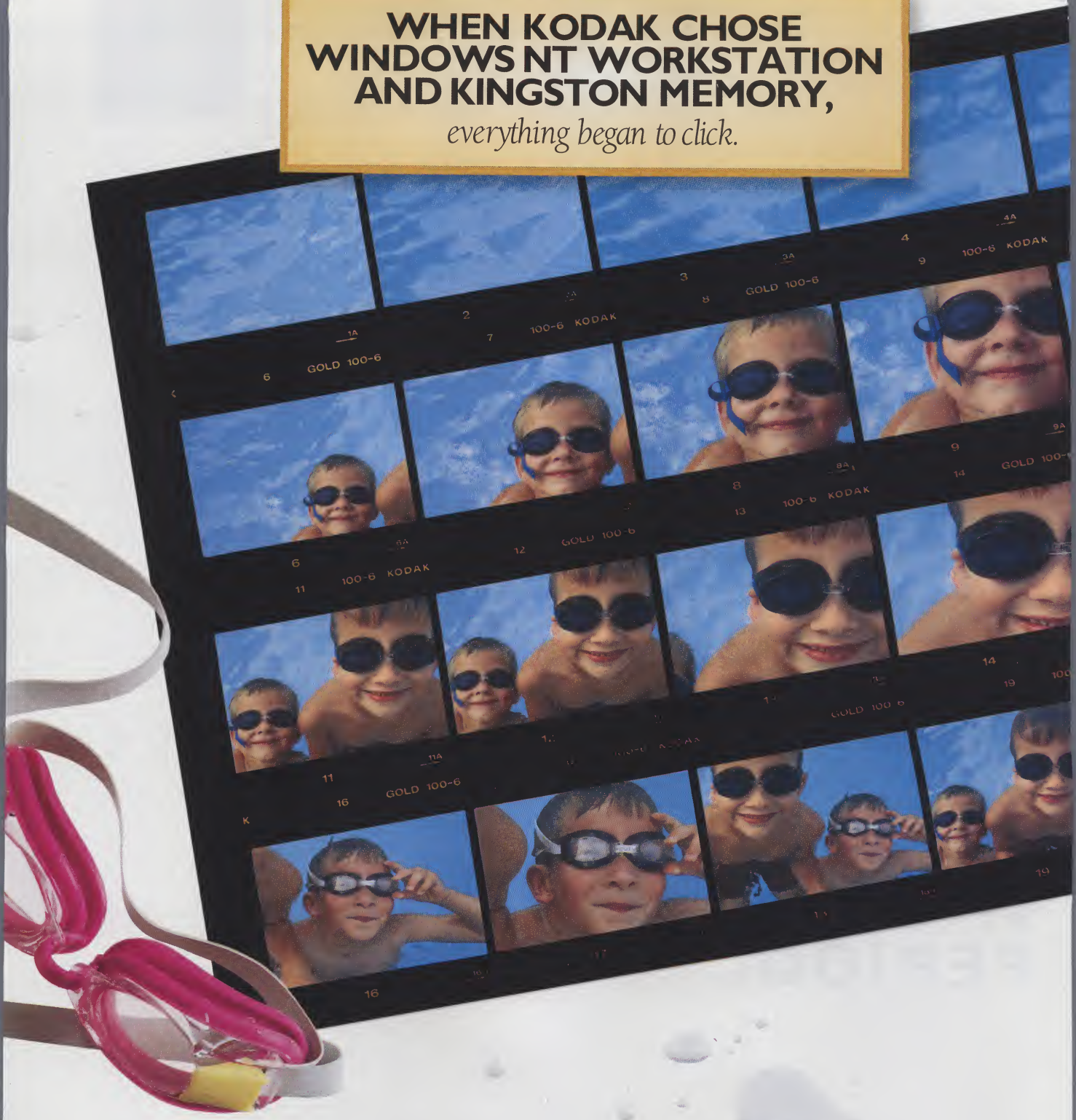

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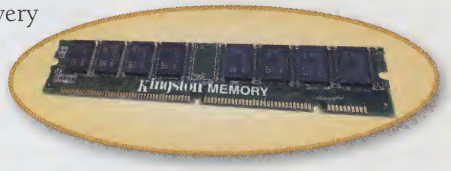

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Speed Rush: Pentium II

SNEAK PREVIEW

Intel ratchets up the clock speed on its Pentium II by a whopping 30 percent, but you see only a wimpy boost in throughput. Sound familiar? Not this time around: 400MHz Pentium IIs now have a secret weapon. It's called the BX, and it's no BS.

Eight first-generation 400MHz boxes dropped into *PC Computing*'s Performance Labs, all outfitted with the new 440BX logic motherboard chip set and 64MB of RAM. Among other tricks, the BX supports a 100MHz system bus, up from the plodding 66MHz bus used today. This gives system performance a noticeable spur in I/O-intensive tasks like Web surfing and multimedia.

The BX chip set also supports superfast (and super-expensive) 100MHz SDRAM chips. Couple this with the Pentium II's L2 cache—which admittedly runs at only half the speed of the CPU, but remember that's 200MHz—and you get fast memory and a relatively speedy L2 cache. Together these give integer- and floating point–intensive applications some welcome giddyap.

Numbers Don't Fib Sure enough, our Labs found as much as a 22 percent improvement in Windows 95 application benchmarks over a comparably equipped 333MHz system. Under Windows NT benchmarks, performance on the 400MHz boxes jumped about 15 percent ahead. Yet the prices on these machines—ranging from $2,750 to $3,400—are no higher than those of their slower cousins when they were introduced only months ago.

What's more, today's systems are better stocked. If 6GB and 8GB drives were the starting point last winter, it's not uncommon to find 10GB and 14GB drives today. Nor should you be surprised to find as much as 8MB of memory on your video card. CD-ROM drives at 24- and 32-speed are standard, and several machines come with Iomega Zip or DVD drives, not to mention network cards and/or fast modems.

Windows 95 is standard on half the systems we tested; the other four we tested with Windows NT. To be sure, the Pentium II is best suited for Windows NT. But all of the Win95 systems in this roundup have adequate iron undergirding them to run Microsoft's top-drawer operating system.

Needless to say, the arrival of the 400MHz Pentium II will tromp down the prices on 333MHz systems like a moose through a field of daffodils. In less than six months, the stickers on fully loaded 333MHz PCs have slumped by one-third. Today you can pick one up for a little over $2,000. Even those who've been burned many times by nose-diving PC prices will find this plummet particularly galling.

But take our word for it: The BX chip set makes the 400MHz PII worth the extra cost. Several manufacturers will introduce 350MHz BX-equipped

Hewlett-Packard Vectra VL Series 8

★★★★★

Verdict: The NT box you've been waiting for.

Pros: Stunning performance; fetching price.

Cons: What, no DVD, no Zip drive?

Features As Tested: 10.1GB hard drive, 32X CD-ROM drive, 4MB Matrox Productiva G100 AGP video card, 17-inch monitor, 3Com Fast EtherLink XL 10/100 network interface card.

$2,750 est. street price / Hewlett-Packard / (800) 752-0900

Compaq Deskpro EN

★★★★

Verdict: A well-stocked corporate warrior.

Pros: Top-notch usability; modem *and* NIC.

Cons: Parsimonious hard drive.

Features As Tested: 6.4GB hard drive, 24X CD-ROM drive, 56Kbps fax modem, 8MB ATI Rage Pro AGP card, 17-inch monitor, Netelligent 10/100 network card.

$3,200 est. street price / Compaq Computer Corp. / *Enter 856 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARNOLD TIOSEJO

Guide to PC Computing's Ratings

Excellent *Market leader that offers exceptional performance* ★★★★★

Good *Excels in many areas; a good buy* ★★★★

Acceptable *Average for its class; a justifiable purchase* ★★★

Poor *Out-of-date or substandard; offset by some positive features* ★★

Unacceptable *Missing necessary features; avoid* ★

PCs Hit 400MHz

machines alongside their 400MHz offerings. Our advice: Pass. If you're buying a power machine, don't skimp. For that matter, keep in mind that a 450MHz version will appear before Christmas.

Pumped-Up Pentium II For those who want one on their desks yesterday, look no further than Hewlett-Packard's Vectra VL Series 8. It was fastest overall in Windows NT performance, even if under Windows 95 it tied the Micron Millennia 400 and the Dell Dimension XPS R400 outgunned it ever so slightly (you can equip your Vectra VL with either OS). It's also the cheapest system of the lot—$2,750—and that includes a 17-inch monitor.

The Vectra VL is an outstanding business machine: 64MB of SDRAM (running at 100MHz), a 10.1GB hard drive, a Matrox Productiva AGP graphics card with 4MB of memory, a 32-speed CD-ROM drive, and 3Com's 10/100 EtherLink adapter. Hook it up; plug it in; turn it on. Its hard drive spins at 7,200 rpm, delivering the kind of performance that approaches a SCSI drive, without the fuss.

What's more, the Vectra VL is a usability winner through and through. No drives—including the CD-ROM—use screws or brackets. Unplug their connectors and push a couple of well-marked tabs, and they slide in or out of the machine with ease. Ditto for the expansion boards, which are held in place by I/O "lockers," not screws. Memory slots are front and center. And kudos to HP's multimedia keyboard, which includes audio controls as well as quick-launch keys situated right where your fingers can dance on them.

Meanwhile, NEC has a duo of NT machines, both similarly priced and similarly configured. The $3,353 Direction SPB 400 was quick on the heels of the Vectra VL in application benchmarks. The machine packs a monster 14.4GB hard drive, Diamond's Viper V330 AGP video card stocked with 4MB of memory, a 32-speed CD-ROM drive, a 56Kbps fax modem, and a wide-eyed 19-inch monitor. If you're trying to save costs, squeeze down the monitor and hard drive.

Or check out the company's PowerMate 8100. At $3,198, including a 17-inch monitor, the machine comes stocked with the same monster hard drive and CD-ROM drive, ATI's 3D Rage Pro card with 8MB of memory, but no modem. You can scale down this machine in cost and configuration as far as you please. We like the Direction better, but the PowerMate is a good way to get a 400MHz machine past the bean counters.

So is Compaq's $3,200 Deskpro EN, which outperformed the NEC PowerMate. Besides, it packs a 56Kbps fax modem as well as a Netelligent 10/100 network card. Does its 6.4GB hard drive seem stingy? Store your piggy files on the network. There's a whopping 8MB of memory on the ATI Rage Pro AGP card. And usability is first-rate: lift a lever and you can slide the motherboard right out of the box for upgrades or repair.

Wailing Windows Knock $200 off the price of the Deskpro EN, subtract the network interface, and you get the Deskpro EP, which we tested under Windows 95. It has the same top-flight usability (plus drive bays that pivot to 90-degree

Compaq Deskpro EP

★★★★

Verdict: Compaq quality on a budget.

Pros: Competitive price; standout usability.

Cons: Basic configuration.

Features As Tested: 6.4GB hard drive, 24X CD-ROM drive, 56Kbps fax modem, 8MB ATI Rage Pro AGP card, 17-inch monitor.

$3,000 est. street price / Compaq Computer Corp. / *Enter 857 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Dell Dimension XPS R400

★★★★

Verdict: The Win95 performance leader.

Pros: Ripping speed; stocked to the nines.

Cons: Pricey, pricey.

Features As Tested: 14.4GB hard drive, DVD drive, 56Kbps fax modem, 4MB STB Nvidia Plus, network interface card, Iomega Zip drive.

$3,399 est. street price / Dell Computer Corp. / (800) 879-3355 / *Enter 858 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Gateway 2000 G6-400

★★★★

Verdict: More for the money, as you'd expect.

Pros: Plush configuration.

Cons: No network card.

Features As Tested: 10GB hard drive, DVD drive, 56Kbps fax modem, 4MB Nvidia video card, Iomega Zip drive.

$2,954 est. street price / Gateway 2000 / (800) 846-2000 / *Enter 859 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Micron Millennia 400

★★★★

Verdict: Good value for the dollar.

Pros: Top-drawer parts and performance.

Cons: Network card not included.

Features As Tested: 10.1GB hard drive, Toshiba DVD-ROM SD-M1102, 56Kbps fax modem, 4MB Diamond Viper V330 AGP graphics card, Iomega Zip drive.

$3,099 est. street price / Micron Electronics / (888) 634-8799 / *Enter 860 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

NEC Direction SPB 400

★★★★

Verdict: An NT workhorse.

Pros: First-rate configuration.

Cons: On the pricey side.

Features As Tested: 14.4GB hard drive, NEC 32X CD-ROM drive, 56Kbps fax modem, 4MB Diamond Viper V330 AGP graphics card, 19-inch monitor.

$3,353 est. street price / NEC Computer Systems Division / (888) 863-2669 / *Enter 861 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

NEC PowerMate 8100

★★★★

Verdict: A corporate team player.

Pros: Big drive; excellent video.

Cons: Otherwise spare configuration.

Features As Tested: 14.4GB hard drive, NEC 32X CD-ROM drive, 8MB ATI 3D Rage Pro AGP card, 17-inch monitor.

$3,198 est. street price. / NEC Computer Systems Division / (888) 863-2669 / *Enter 862 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

angles), as well as ATI's Rage Pro AGP card with 8MB of memory. But its performance score fell 17 percentage points behind that of the Windows 95 leader Dell Dimension XPS R400. At 6.4GB, the Deskpro EP's hard drive is less than half as large, and there's no Zip or DVD drive. But the machine is nearly $400 cheaper.

On the other hand, if you've got the dough—$3,399 to be exact—it's hard not to love the Dell Dimension XPS R400. It was the performance leader in Windows 95 application benchmarks. Its fast-spinning 14.4GB hard drive should provide adequate storage for just about any power user. The machine comes with both DVD and Zip drives, and both a fax modem and a speedy Ethernet interface. And the whole show is backed by Dell's legendary service and support.

Micron's Millennia 400 tags just behind the Dimension across the board, most of all in price. Its performance was slightly slower. Its 10.1GB hard drive is slightly smaller. But it comes with a DVD drive and a Zip drive. There's a 56Kbps fax modem, but you have to supply your own network card. And the total damage is $3,099. Incidentally, Micron is happy to load Windows NT for $99 more.

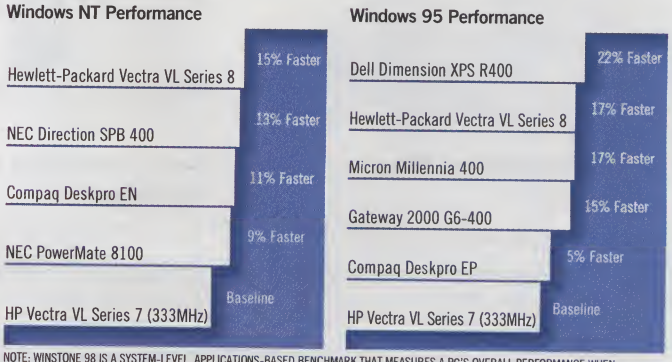
Like the Dimension and the Millennia, Gateway 2000's G6-400 is a fully stocked system, including DVD and Zip drives. But it costs less ($2,954) and offers a better audio system, thanks to Boston Acoustics speakers and a subwoofer. The machine also features a 10GB hard drive and a 56Kbps fax modem, but no network card.

Burned Fingers These are all fine machines, you say, but then, so was the 333MHz Pentium II when it debuted only six months ago. Now it's got the performance appeal of moldy yogurt. Obviously, there's no stopping—or even slowing—the pace of PC development. And power users always take it on the chin. How long before these 400MHz systems fade into obsolescence?

Prognostication is a tricky business, but to its credit Intel has sketched a basic road map for the next year. It should help you plan your purchases. By the time you read this, the first Celeron systems should be appearing in dealers' show rooms. Essentially a Pentium II CPU without the L2 cache, the Celeron will deliver the approximate performance of a 266MHz MMX Pentium CPU. But PCs powered by it may cost less than $1,000.

Before year-end, expect to see an enhanced version of the BX chip set, adding FireWire and Device Bay support. This will coincide with the arrival of the 450MHz version of the Pentium II chip. Also, Slot 2 Pentium II chips will make their appearance. Designed primarily for servers, the L2 cache on this CPU will run at the same clock speed as the chip itself. It will deliver an immense boost in performance for I/O-intensive tasks. But the whole affair will be expensive. **MARTY JEROME**

Blazing BX Systems



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Passing Gear: HP's 400MHz BX chip set system, the Vectra VL Series 8, is the NT racer, while the Dell Dimension gets the nod for its Windows 95 numbers over a 333MHz Pentium II.

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Open your eyes, brothers and sisters. Behold the dazzling clarity of the new, CTX 19" monitor.

Though it seems wild, its 18" viewable area is more than many 20" monitors. All the better to see more of whatever you dream up.

And it's not just bigger. It's finer. Because the VL950 gives you a 0.26-mm dot pitch. With maxed-out 1600 x 1200 resolution. Plus a gazillion colors and all the bells and whistles you'll ever need.

Hey, why be limited by your puny, little screen? There's no need. The VL950 costs less than many of the other guys' 17" monitors.

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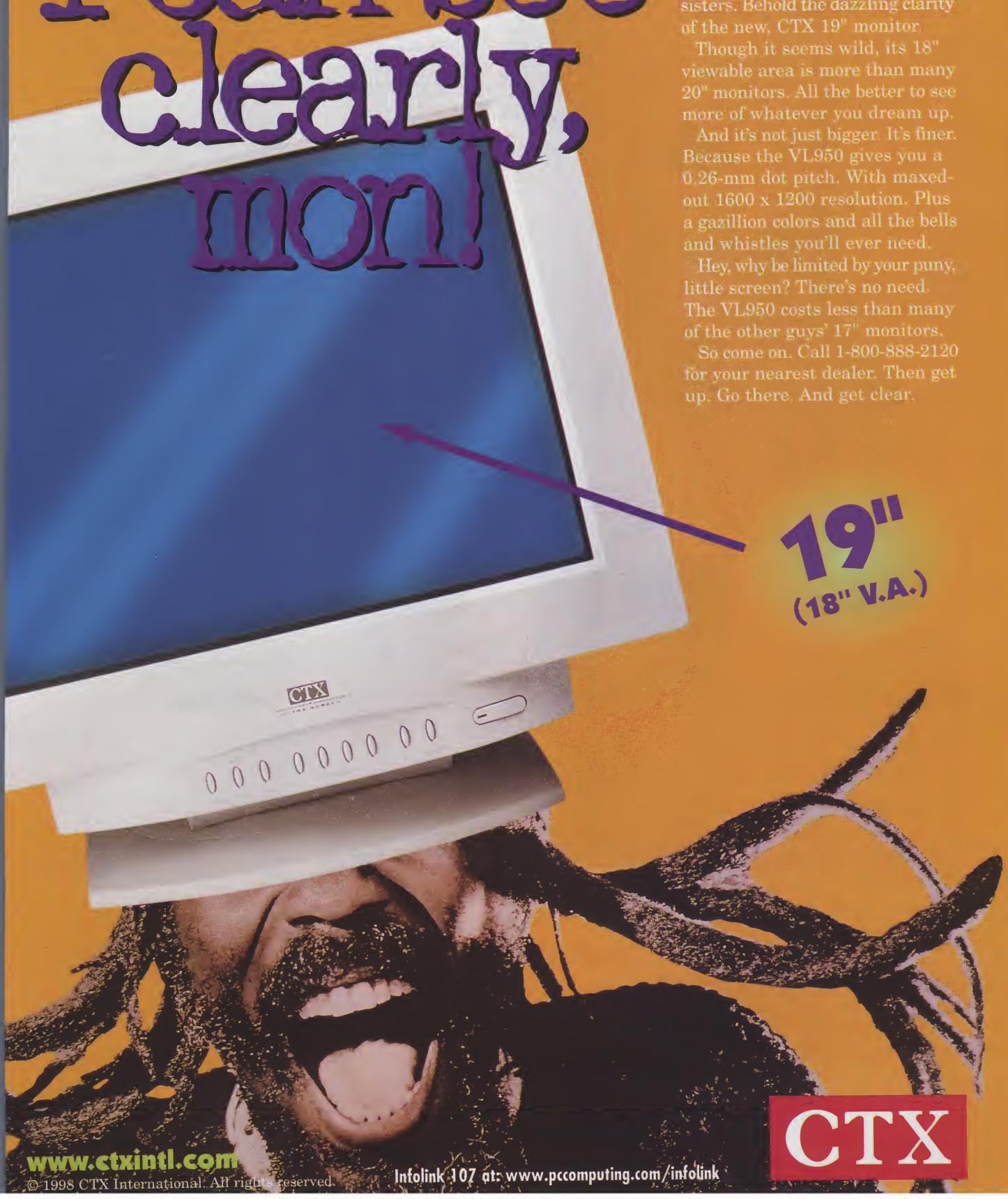
19"
(18" V.A.)



CTX

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Infolink 107 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

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At an Amateur Price

IBM

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IBM and Value America have teamed up to bring you a spectacular value on a very special computer. The PC 365's fast Pentium Pro processor and robust operating system make this the perfect computer for mid-size networks. It runs on Windows NT Work-station 4.0, which is 32-bit optimized for increased efficiency and productivity. NT is an incredibly stable operating environ-ment. It offers significant security advantages, and will run most Windows 95 programs like Office 98. And the PC 365 comes with Lotus Smart Suite, which just may be all the software you'll ever need.

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PC 365

- Intel® Pentium® Pro Processor 200MHz
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- Lotus Smart Suite
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- 4MB Video RAM
- 16X CD-ROM

$799

Monitor sold separately.

intel inside
PENTIUM® PRO PROCESSOR

Monitor sold Separately.

PC 300GL-233

More than enough power and speed to run sophisticated, RAM-hungry software.

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- 32MB SDRAM (256MB max.)
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- Windows 95 Installed
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Monitor sold Separately.

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Need room to expand? This is it… Fast, powerful and roomy, this IBM mini-tower has six open slots and 4 open bays.

- Intel® Pentium® II Processor 266 MHz.
- 32MB SDRAM (256MB max.)
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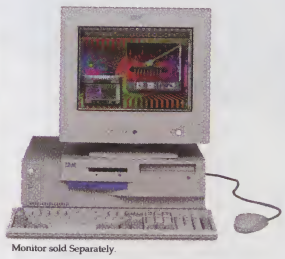
- 512 KB L2 Cache
- 2MB Video RAM
- 6 Slots, 6 Bays
- Windows 95 Installed
- Warranty: 3 Years Parts, 1 Year Labor, 1st Year On-site.

$1,099



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PC 300GL-266

The perfect blend of powerful office computer and fast multimedia workstation.

- Intel® Pentium® II Processor 266 MHz.
- 32MB SDRAM (256MB max.)
- 4.2GB S.M.A.R.T. Hard Drive
- 512 KB L2 Cache
- 2MB Video RAM
- 32x CD-ROM
- 4 Slots, 4 Bays
- Windows 95 Installed
- Warranty: 3 Years Parts, 1 Year Labor, 1st Year On-site.

$1,199

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- 13.7" Viewable Image

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$399

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- Your choice

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Sleek, Slim and Light

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ThinkPad 560s have full sized 85-key keyboards with generous ergonomically designed palm rests, so input is easy. The TrackPoint III pointing device with QuickStop helps you navigate smoothly. With all these great features, it's little wonder IBM ThinkPads have become America's favorite notebooks.

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It's made for movers and shakers—the lightest, thinnest ThinkPad is perfect if you're always on the go.

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- 4.1 Pounds Light
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- 12.1" TFT Active Matrix Display
- Windows 95 & Lotus Organizer
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ThinkPad 380ED

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- 12.1" FRSTN Color Display
- 800 x 600 Resolution
- 1.125MB Video DRAM
- 256KB L2 cache
- 20X CD-ROM
- Lithium-Ion Battery
- Infrared Port
- 7 Pounds, 2.4" Thick
- Windows 95, Lotus Smart Suite

$1,399

ThinkPad 380D

The 380D features IBM's TFT active matrix color display for a bright, clear view into inner space.

- Intel® Pentium® Processor MMX Technology 150 MHz
- 16 MB RAM (80MB max.)
- 2.1 GB EIDE Hard Drive
- 12.1" TFT Active Matrix Display
- 800 x 600 Resolution
- 1.125MB Video DRAM
- 256KB L2 cache
- 8X CD-ROM
- Lithium-Ion Battery
- Infrared Port
- 6.9 Pounds, 2.4" Thick
- Windows 95, Lotus Smart Suite

$1,495

ThinkPad 380XD

When only the best of everything is good enough, the 380XD is the ThinkPad of choice.

- Intel® Pentium® Processor MMX Technology 233 MHz
- 32 MB RAM (96MB max.)
- 3.2GB SMART EIDE Hard Drive
- 12.1" HPA Color Display
- 800 x 600 Resolution
- 1.125MB Video DRAM
- 512KB L2 cache
- 24X CD-ROM
- Lithium-Ion Battery
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- 7.1 Pounds, 2.4" Thick
- Windows 95, Lotus Smart Suite

$2,199

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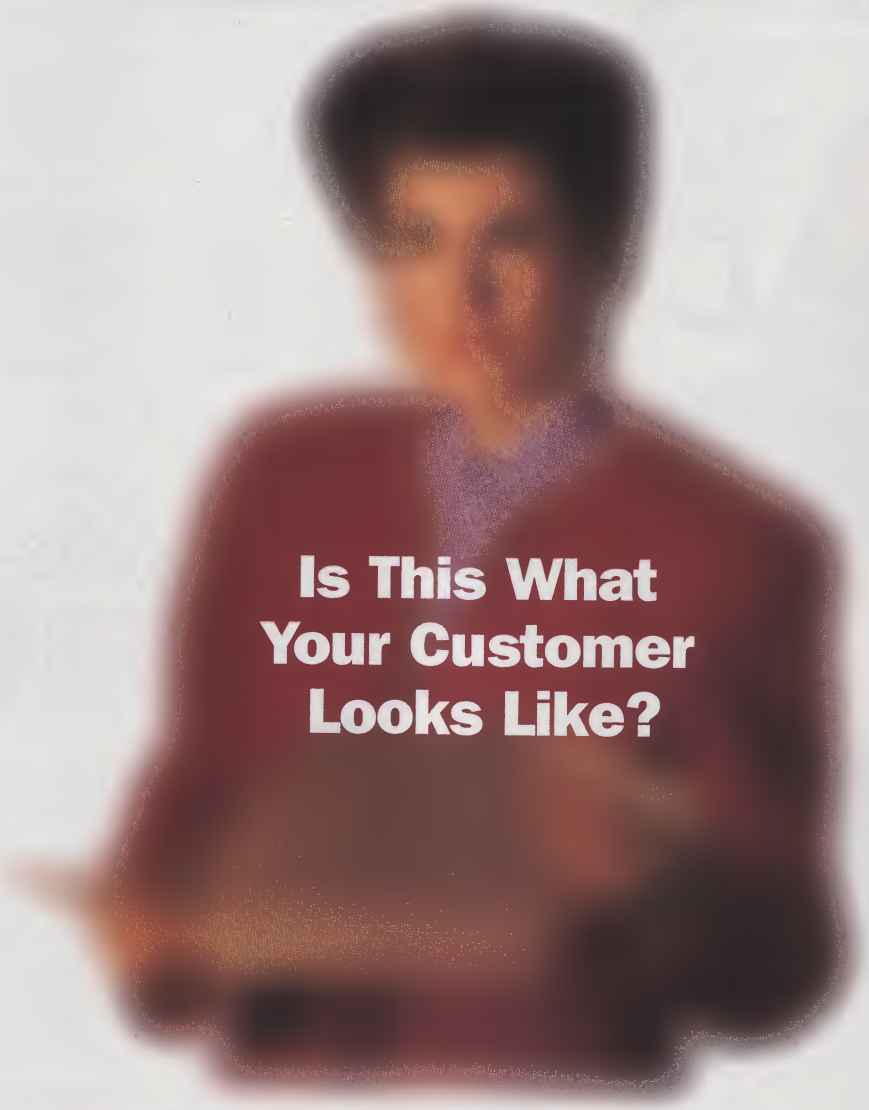

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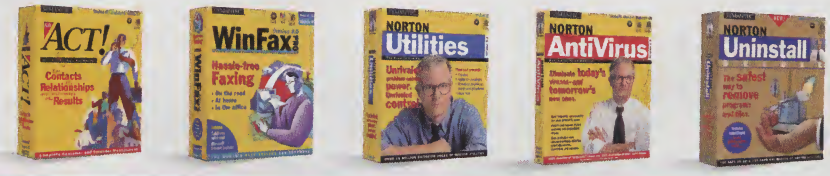

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Infolink 166 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

The Pilot Flies Again

You know the type: They're always on time. They're one step ahead of their to-do list. They've got phone numbers at their fingertips. And they're never bored because they always have a game to play. We're talking about your average PalmPilot owner of course. The darling of the PDA world, 3Com's PalmPilot has risen to cult status. And with the newest version of the Pilot, the Palm III, the best has improved—although this upgrade doesn't deliver as many enhancements as we had hoped.

We Want One: 3Com's Palm III is a disappointing upgrade, but it's still the best handheld PC around. New to this version are an infrared port, more memory, and a flip-up plastic cover.

New Look The minute you lay your hands on the Palm III you'll realize it's different from the original PalmPilot. It's lighter, and the rounded edges make it feel more comfortable in your hand. The device also now sports a plastic flap to protect the monochrome touch-screen display. Nice idea, but the cover doesn't fold back all the way and is a nuisance. Fortunately, it pops off so you can discard it immediately (we did).

Also new to this version is an infrared port at the top of the unit that lets you transfer an electronic business card to another Palm III device. You can also use the infrared port to wirelessly download applications from another Palm III. Operation is simple: Just aim and fire.

Unfortunately, the Palm III's infrared support is limited to other Palm III devices. We'd like to see a Pilot that talks to other PDAs, such as Windows CE devices or the Psion Series 5. And because every notebook PC today includes an infrared port, you should be able to sync wirelessly with your notebook. Your Palm III cradle would be one less thing to tote on your next trip.

Screen Test The Palm III's screen is identical to that of earlier models—which means it's not always easy to read in dim lighting conditions, even with the backlighting turned on. The writing area still takes up a full quarter of the lower part of the screen. Microsoft's new palm-size PC spec lets palm-size PC devices invoke a writing area with a touch of the stylus—the rest of the time you can tuck the writing area away and squeeze more viewing area from your tiny screen.

The HotSync technology has been improved and now includes all the features of the earlier Network HotSync. Out of the box you can synchronize data remotely via network, by dial-in, or over a TCP/IP Internet connection. Keep in mind, however, that the external modem costs an extra $129. In addition, the Palm III can import data from Microsoft Exchange, Microsoft Outlook 97 and Outlook Express, Lotus cc:Mail, and Qualcomm Eudora Pro.

The Palm III ships with 2MB of memory, twice as much as the high-end PalmPilot. The device stores up to 6,000 addresses, 5 years of appointments, 1,500 to-do items, 1,500 memos, and 200 e-mail messages. In other words, even the most organized power user isn't likely to fill it up anytime soon.

The good news for current PalmPilot users with version envy is that you can upgrade your model for just $129 (including adding more memory and infrared). Or trade in your Pilot and get $75 off a Palm III.

Admittedly, the Palm III isn't a killer upgrade. That said, it's still an impressive organizer. It's tiny, the handwriting recognition is accurate, and there are thousands of applications available. New palm-size PC devices that run Windows CE will undoubtedly give the Palm III a run for its money. Until then, it's simply the best handheld PC you can buy. KYLA K. CARLSON

FILEBOX

3Com Palm III

★★★★

Verdict: Still the best handheld PC you can buy—but the upgrade doesn't go far enough.

Pros: Small form factor; improved HotSync features; more memory.

Cons: Annoying plastic cover; small screen; no integrated modem.

Competition: Today's Windows CE devices, such as those from HP, Casio, and Philips, are much larger and cost two to three times as much. The one advantage is that they all run pocket versions of standard applications including Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Outlook.

Features As Tested: Palm OS 3.0, 2MB of storage, infrared port for data sharing with other Palm III users, 4.7 by 3.2 by 0.7 inches, 6 ounces, HotSync, Palm Desktop Organizer software.

$399 list price
3Com
(800) 881-7256
Enter 863 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

The Skinny on Desktop LCDs

If you're waiting for flat-panel monitors to fit as nicely into your budget as bulky CRTs, keep waiting. But three new flat screens from IBM, NEC, and Samsung offer a glimmer of hope for a sizable thin display—if you can spare the cash.

Big Enough IBM's 9516 active-matrix LCD Color Monitor is striking, in more ways than one. Its black body and bright blue buttons are funky and eye-catching. But what really stands out is the 16.1-inch screen. Though only a couple of inches larger than the other screens in this roundup, visually the IBM 9516 dwarfs the competition. If you have a 17-inch monitor on your desk right now, you won't compromise on viewing area with the IBM 9516.

Unfortunately, the IBM 9516 isn't just plug and play—plug and plug and plug and play is more like it. Its complex cable connection makes for tedious setup. But it's worth it: The IBM 9516 has gorgeous color and 1,280-by-1,028 resolution. The text could be sharper, and at $3,499 the price could be a lot lower. But for size and design, the IBM 9516 hits the consumer target dead-on.

NEC continues to blaze the flat-panel display trail with the MultiSync LCD400V, the first legitimate contender priced under $1,200. How's the image? For $1,199 it's outstanding. The MultiSync LCD400V offers the same basic features as NEC's original 14.1-inch flat-panel MultiSync LCD400, with a few cut corners. The LCD400V lacks the XtraView technology found in NEC's other flat panels, so its viewing angle is not as wide. Also, we had to crank the brightness controls full throttle to get an acceptable level.

However, NEC actually improved on text quality with the LCD400V; it produces unprecedented sharp detail at 1,024-by-768 resolution. Installation couldn't be easier—just plug it in and go. It's not the best flat-panel monitor we've seen, but at this price it's a milestone product.

Wired for Sound Samsung's SyncMaster 400TFT has a great image, and something extra—multimedia. There are capable speakers built into its base, as well as external microphone and headphone jacks. You'll also find an integrated condenser microphone and a full range of external sound controls. The SyncMaster is USB-ready, with connectors on the back panel.

The 14-inch monitor sports a hot design and a cool gunmetal gray color. This display is a bright, 1,024-by-768 image with a 120-degree viewing angle. The SyncMaster 400TFT's color is excellent, but its text has some slight ghosting. Overall, for $1,459, the SyncMaster is everything you need in a midsize flat-panel monitor.

Flat panels are still a futuristic dream for most of us. But if you're in the market, your choice depends on your priorities. If size matters most, go for IBM's 9516 LCD Color Monitor. For some multimedia juice, try Samsung's SyncMaster 400TFT. And if you want a good, low-cost flat panel, NEC's MultiSync LCD400V sets a new record for active-matrix pricing without skimping on quality. JULIE POLITO

Viva Variety: Want to make your viewing world flat and fantastic? Samsung's SyncMaster 400TFT provides multimedia extras, IBM's 9516 LCD Color Monitor goes for big-screen dazzle, and NEC's MultiSync LCD400V is a value champ (left to right).

FILEBOX

Samsung SyncMaster 400TFT

★★★★

Verdict: A solid flat panel with a multimedia kick.

Pros: Good image quality and design; excellent price; USB-ready; includes speakers, an integrated microphone, and external sound controls.

Cons: Text could be sharper.

$1,459 est. street price
Samsung Electronics America
(800) 933-4110, (201) 229-4000
Enter 864 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

IBM 9516 LCD Color Monitor

★★★

Verdict: An ambitious monitor that doesn't quite measure up to its price.

Pros: Large screen; good color; innovative design.

Cons: Broken text quality; tedious setup; expensive.

$3,499 est. street price
IBM Corp.
(800) 772-2227
Enter 865 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

NEC MultiSync LCD400V

★★★

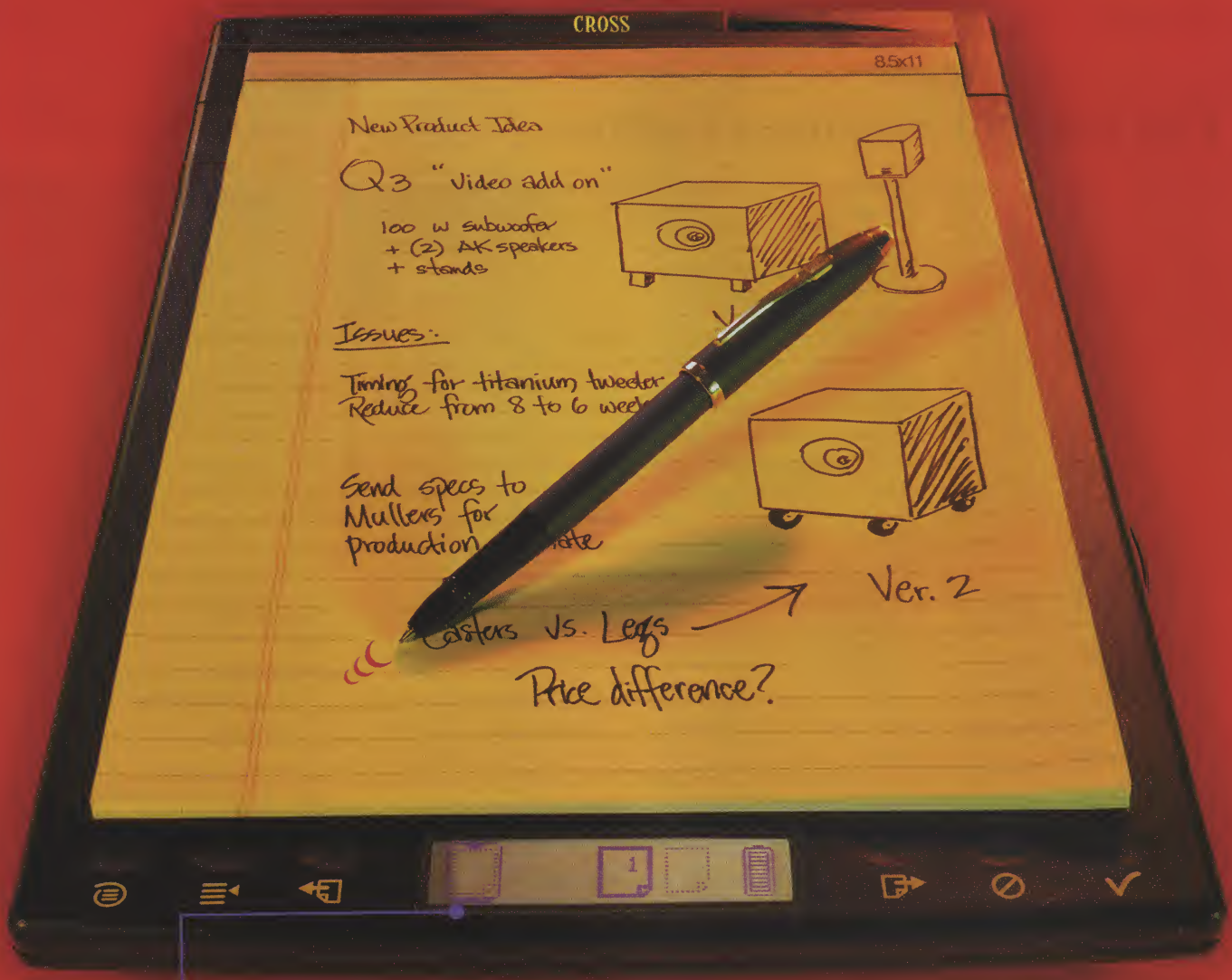
Verdict: A low-price way to buy into a 14-inch flat-panel display.

Pros: Improved sharpness; incredible price; same solid build and controls as the MultiSync LCD400.

Cons: No XtraView technology means image loss from the sides.

$1,199 est. street price
NEC Technologies
(800) 632-4636
Enter 866 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*



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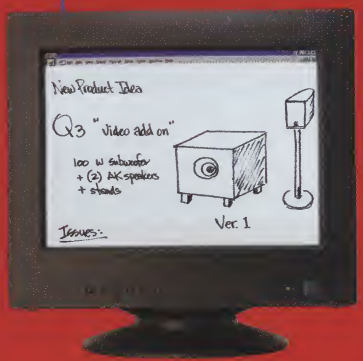

A notepad with a memory chip?

(LOOKS LIKE YOUR NOTES JUST GOT A LOT MORE POWERFUL.)

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- search your notes by keyword or date
- convert selected handwriting to text
- cut and paste into other documents
- e-mail, print, or fax notes from your PC

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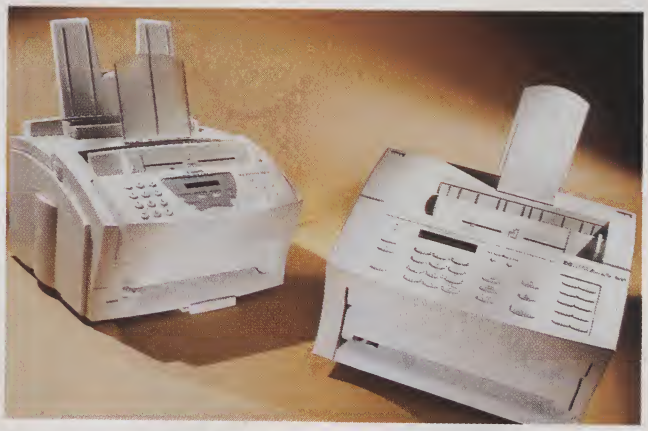
The Perfect Business Partner

Small office may mean small budget, but you'll always need a printer, a fax machine, and a copier. Two new multifunction devices serve up all these options and then some, including scanning and OCR. The Canon MultiPass L6000 and the Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 3100 Printer-Fax-Copier-Scanner are both powered by 6-ppm laser printer engines, which translates to faster speeds, lower costs, and sharper print quality than inkjet machines deliver.

Ready for Anything Setting up the MultiPass was trouble-free, but it took a while to sift through Canon's raft of software options. Of course you'll find the necessary printer, scanner, and fax drivers on the CD. Canon includes Xerox TextBridge Classic OCR for converting scanned pages to editable text. But you'll also have to dig through lots of gratuitous software options, including Starfish Internet Utilities 97 and an ISP offer from AT&T WorldNet.

The laser engine of the MultiPass L6000 is 6 ppm and 600 dpi—not bad for a basic SOHO printer.



All-in-One Office Assistant: Need to print, fax, scan, and copy from your small office? Get it all in one space-saving machine with Canon's $599 MultiPass L6000 (left) or Hewlett-Packard's $699 LaserJet 3100.

The output from the Canon MultiPass L6000 tells you all you need to know about this machine. Its graphics are positively stunning, showing smooth images and rich contrasts.

Sending and receiving faxes directly from the MultiPass or from our PC was straightforward, and scanning with TextBridge proved simple.

Two downsides to the Canon MultiPass are a cryptic front-panel keypad and display, and no parallel cable (which the LaserJet includes).

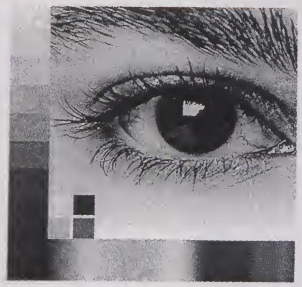
Have It All At first glance, the Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 3100 is just like the MultiPass, sporting a 6-ppm, 600-dpi laser printer in addition to built-in faxing, copying, and scanning features. But closer inspection showed that the LaserJet's output didn't match up to that of the less expensive MultiPass.

As with the MultiPass, the LaserJet's setup and installation were uneventful. We liked the LaserJet's 2-page, visual Quick Setup Guide, and the bundled parallel cable was a thoughtful extra. While the LaserJet didn't match the software offerings of the MultiPass, all the apps included on HP's CD were necessary and useful. For example, the LaserJet includes HP's JetSuite Document Assistant, a command center for controlling your print, fax, copy, and scan jobs.

While the LaserJet's standard 600-dpi laser output was perfectly acceptable for most needs, we didn't find the graphics output measured up to Canon's crispness and sharp details. Where the MultiPass's graphics had a photographic quality, the LaserJet's looked noticeably grainy. The LaserJet's text quality was fine for basic office documents. Surprisingly, the LaserJet also costs $100 more than the MultiPass.

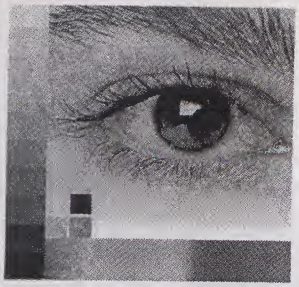
You'll find a few other laser-based multifunction machines that compete at HP's $699 price level, including the Brother MFC-4550 and Panasonic KX-PS600. But none of these more expensive devices compare to the rich output of Canon's $599 MultiPass L6000. It's your best bet for an all-in-one small-office solution. RICH SCHWERIN

CANON



PC Computing Image Test

HP



PC Computing Image Test

Proof Positive: We preferred the rich, detailed output of the MultiPass (left) over the somewhat grainy results of the LaserJet. Plus the MultiPass is a hundred bucks cheaper.

FILEBOX

Canon MultiPass L6000

★★★★

Verdict: Stunning laser output and copies from an affordable small-office champion.

Pros: Low cost; all-in-one laser printing, faxing, copying, and scanning; superior output quality.

Cons: No parallel cable included; CD full of mostly gratuitous software gewgaws.

$599 est. street price
Canon Computer Systems
(800) 652-2666, (714) 438-3000
Enter 867 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 3100

★★★

Verdict: A reliable multifunction workhorse for the small office.

Pros: Useful software bundle; full-featured OCR software; includes parallel cable.

Cons: $100 more expensive than the MultiPass.

$699 est. street price
Hewlett-Packard
(800) 527-3753

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

8:02 a.m. Installed network.
8:59 a.m. Connected with staff.
(In more ways than one.)

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Small-Business Servers on the Double

If the idea of spending tens of thousands of dollars on a server has your business manager seeing red, check out new affordable small-business servers from Sys Technology and SAG Electronics. These entry-level Windows NT 4.0 servers are primarily intended for general-purpose computing in a small office or corporate workgroup. But there's nothing to stop you from upgrading as necessary.

Building Blocks: SAG Electronics' STF 333-RAID 5 (left) and Sys Technology's Sys Server provide plenty of power for your small network, and both will grow with your business.

Speeding Tickets Both servers put a greater emphasis on speed than network redundancy, and unfortunately they lack most of the fail-safe backup systems typical of higher-end LAN servers like the Compaq ProLiant 6000 and the Hewlett-Packard HP NetServer LX Pro 6/200 (see "Crashproof Quad Servers," April, page 88). But with price tags under $10,000 for the SAG STF 333-RAID 5 and the Sys Technology Sys Server, you could buy two servers and mirror them for less than the price of the ProLiant.

The Sys Server uses a pair of 300MHz Pentium II processors, while the STF 333-RAID 5 uses a pair of 333MHz Pentium IIs. Symmetric multiprocessing lets them deliver the equivalent of 600MHz and 666MHz when running OS/network functions as well as multithreaded desktop applications.

Both systems support each processor with 512K of L2 cache, and each CPU has an equal claim on 256MB of synchronous DRAM (SDRAM). That's expandable to 512MB on the Sys Server and to 2GB on the STF 333-RAID 5, which relies on error checking and correcting (ECC) SDRAM. ECC keeps the STF 333-RAID 5 array from being brought down by single-bit parity errors. It also reports errors to the IS manager via Intel LANDesk Client Manager software, included on both servers.

Lifeline to the LAN Intel LANDesk maintains stats on server and client hardware configurations, temperature, and operating conditions of critical server components. You can retrieve this information from any LANDesk-enabled client. (Both servers include a pair of Intel EtherExpress Pro/100 PCI TX 10/100Base-T network interface cards.)

The Sys Server is driven by a single 300-watt power supply and cooled by a total of ten fans directed at critical components. The STF-RAID 5 has the same fan configuration as the Sys, but with an extra hot-swappable power supply and fan for backup.

Networks are all about transaction throughput and, for that, both machines use triple-channel Ultra Wide SCSI controllers. The Sys controller is buffered by 8MB of Enhanced DRAM. The STF-RAID 5 has 64MB of fast-page-mode DRAM. These controllers provide a bus bandwidth of 3 x 40MBps. But one channel and one drive on each are devoted to OS activities, so you end up with a bandwidth of 2 x 40MBps for simultaneous reads and writes across a RAID array of five 4.5GB Seagate Cheetah hard drives (also available in 9GB models). Both the Sys Server and the SAG STF 333-RAID 5 have room for ten drives. In our performance tests the STF-RAID 5 processed a few more transactions per second than the Sys Server.

With virtually identical prices and close performance rates, it's hard to tell these servers apart. Both are adequate for general-purpose server or heavy database duties. But the SAG STF 333-RAID 5 has faster processors, better memory, more cache, a backup power supply, and more room for expansion. For now and your growing future, it's the better buy. MIKE HOGAN

FILEBOX

STF 333-RAID 5

★★★★

Verdict: A dependable workgroup LAN that doesn't cost a fortune.

Pros: Fast 333MHz Pentium IIs; 64MB of controller cache; grows with your business.

Cons: Few redundant features.

Features As Tested: Two Pentium II 333MHz CPUs with 512K of L2 cache, 256MB of ECC SDRAM, Windows NT Server 4.0, five Seagate 4.5GB Cheetah hard drives, 32X CD-ROM drive, dual 300-watt power supplies, two integrated Intel 10/100Mbps NICs, Intel 440LX AGP chip set, AMI three-channel Ultra Wide SCSI-2 RAID controllers.

$8,720 est. street price
SAG Electronics
(800) 989-3475, (978) 683-0339
Enter 868 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Sys Server

★★★

Verdict: A basic start for a basic network.

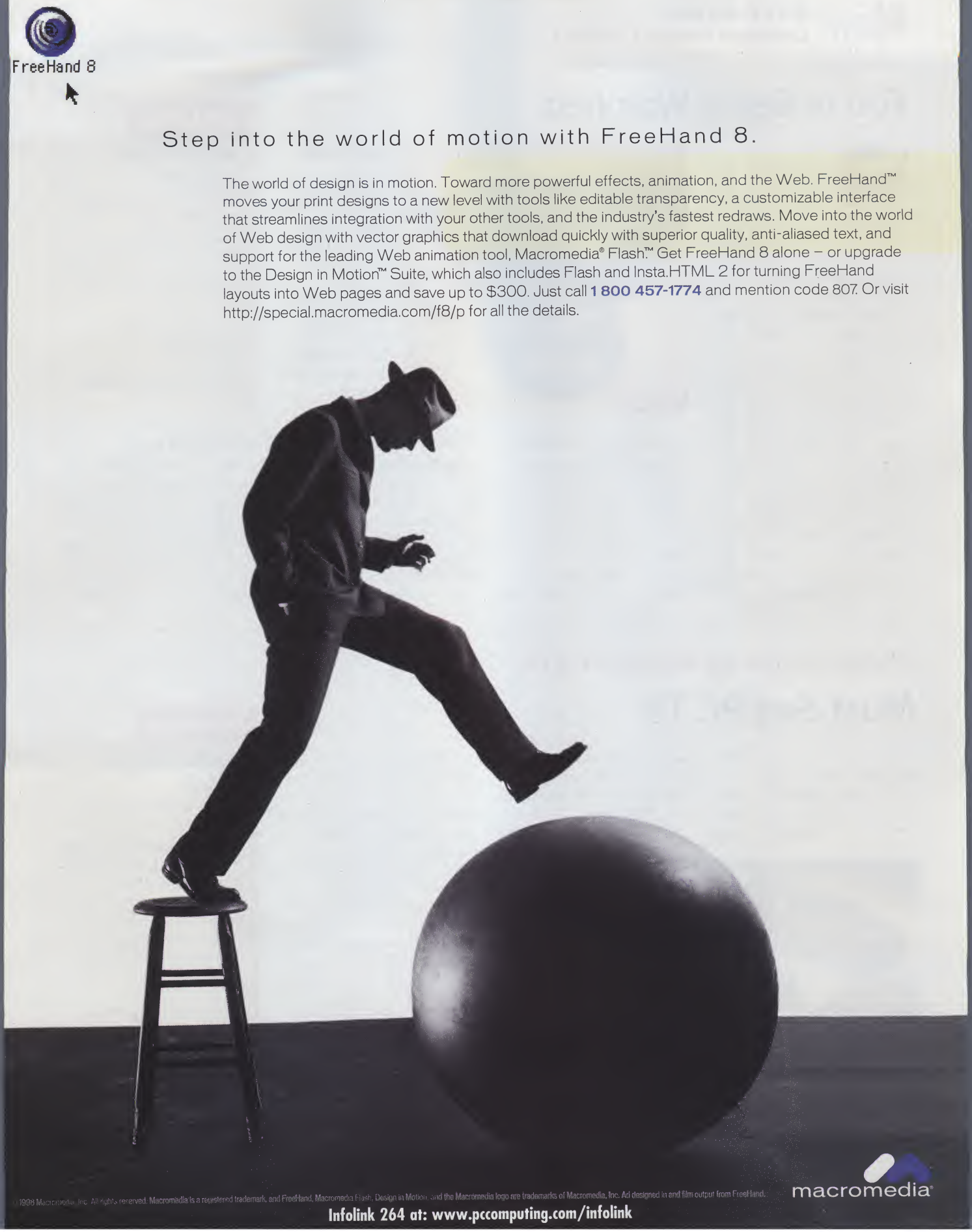
Pros: Two 300MHz Pentium II processors; Seagate Cheetah drives; extra NIC.

Cons: No backup fan; virtually no redundancy; slightly lower performance.

Features As Tested: Two Pentium II 300MHz CPUs with 512K of L2 cache, 256MB of SDRAM, Windows NT Server 4.0, five Seagate 4.5GB Cheetah hard drives, 24X CD-ROM drive, 300-watt power supply, two 10/100Mbps NICs, Ultra DMA/33 drive controller, triple-channel Ultra Wide SCSI-3 controller, RAID array controller, 8MB Matrox Millennium II AGP graphics card.

$9,794 direct price
Sys Technology
(800) 613-9963, (714) 821-3900
Enter 869 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*



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Infolink 264 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

You're Being Watched

SNEAK PREVIEW

Want to get in on the desktop digital imaging scene without going mad, broke, or both? Kodak's fast, cheap DVC323 could be your way in. It looks like a Star Trek phaser gun, but this $169 USB camera and its included software let you capture images and communicate with them.

Overall, the DVC323 is a cheaper, improved version of Kodak's first desktop camera, the DVC300. Just plug it into your USB port and the DVC323 is up and taking photos in no time. The camera produces better 640-by-480 snapshots than its predecessor and records video with or without sound at up to 30 fps. PictureWorks Live software lets you alter exposure, sharpness, color balance, and other settings with instant preview feedback. The camera's onboard shutter button lets you take photos or start and stop video recording without reaching for the keyboard.

On Record: Digital snapshots and video from your desk are as easy as pushing a button with Kodak's DVC323. This USB camera takes terrific 640-by-480 still images or video at 30 fps.

Kodak provides a TWAIN interface to capture still images directly from Photoshop or other TWAIN-compliant applications like the bundled Eastman Software Imaging for Windows. Kodak also throws in MetaCreations Kai's Power-Goo, PictureWorks NetCard, Microsoft NetMeeting, and a demo version of White Pine Software CU-SeeMe.

The camera is USB-only, and its desktop format leaves you tied to your PC for taking photos. But if you need to quickly take and send images from your desk, the Kodak DVC323 is a simple, slick little camera. **BOB WEIBEL**

FILEBOX

Kodak DVC323

★★★★

Verdict: An affordable entry into desktop video.

Pros: Easy installation; good capture quality; lots of software.

Cons: USB-only; tethered to your desktop.

$169 list price
Eastman Kodak
(800) 235-6325
Enter 872 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

RF-Link Technology Wireless PC@TV

Must-See PC TV

Admit it: You've lusted after Gateway 2000's Destination DMC home-theater PC, with its giant monitor and lay-back-and-relax wireless keyboard. But you already own a souped-up PC and a big-screen TV. If only they weren't at opposite ends of the house. . . .

RF-Link Technology's Wireless PC@TV bridges the gap by beaming audio and video signals from your computer to your television. RF-Link supplies the transmitters, wireless keyboard, and software; you supply the arbitration once the family starts arguing over whose turn it is.

What's On? The RF-Link Wireless PC@TV's transmitters beam audio and video signals to your TV from up to 100 feet, straight through walls and floors.

Of course, that won't happen if you can't get the thing working properly. Setup is tricky, and your video card must be capable of 640-by-480 resolution at 60Hz.

RF-Link's TV-friendly Web browser enlarges text and graphics for easier viewing, and its clever click-free scrolling tool simplifies navigation. It's not particularly adept with frame-based Web sites, but it does support HTML 3.2 and Java. As for games, they aren't quite as sharp or colorful on a TV screen, but bigger is definitely better.

Though not always practical, Wireless PC@TV is a great gizmo for any family with an extra-large TV. Finally you can enjoy big-screen computing without shelling out big bucks. **RICK BROIDA**

FILEBOX

Wireless PC@TV

★★★

Verdict: A cure for PC home-theater envy.

Pros: Spiffy Web browser overcomes TV's display limitations; comfortable, versatile wireless keyboard; transmitters have excellent range.

Cons: Trying setup; the browser chokes on some Web sites; TV is adequate only for play, not work.

$350 est. street price
RF-Link Technology
(888) 273-5465, (310) 787-2328
Enter 873 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

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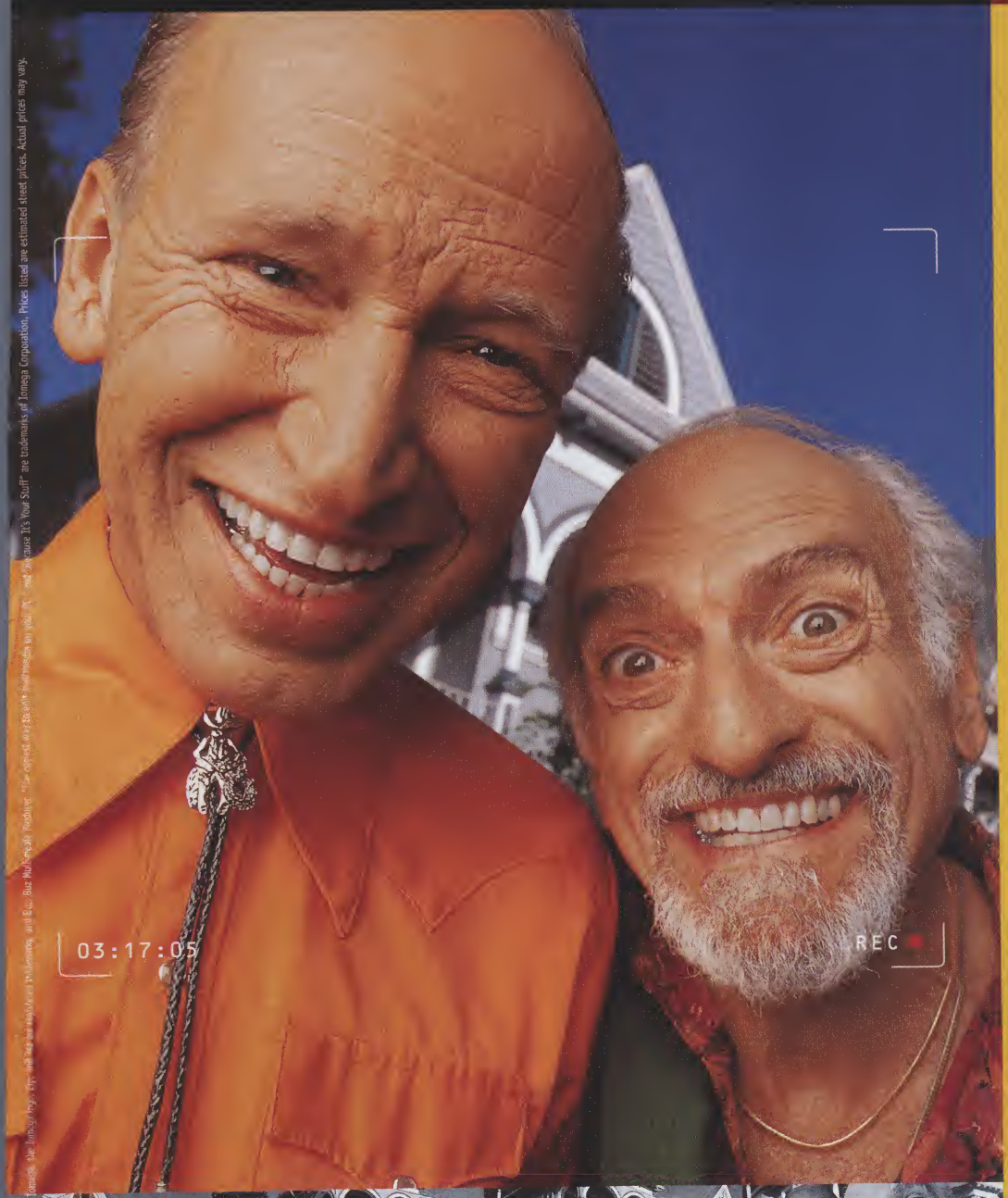

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The Only Carry-on You Need

Airlines are cracking down: You get just one carry-on item, so choose it carefully. But if you're traveling with Unicent Technologies' Voyager 1330 notebook, you've got nothing to worry about—it has everything you need to stay productive in the air or on the road.

The Voyager 1330 is the first of what promises to be several notebook models from Unicent, an established direct dealer of desktop systems. This inaugural effort doesn't disappoint either. The large, bright, 13.3-inch active-matrix screen offers as much viewing area as a 15-inch CRT. Graphics and video performance are snappy thanks to a 64-bit graphics accelerator with 4MB of SGRAM. A 233MHz MMX Pentium and 64MB of fast SDRAM power the whole show.

The unit comes standard with a removable 20-speed CD-ROM and integrated floppy drives (both side-mounted), a Fast-IR port, dual CardBus slots, and a single USB port. You can even display your work on a television monitor thanks to a composite video-out jack. The keyboard is well laid out and spacious, and you can squeeze as much as three hours from the machine's lithium-ion battery. Plus there's a built-in K56flex internal modem with an integrated phone jack.

The trade-off for all this power is the machine's wrenching 7.8-pound traveling weight. But priced at $2,999, the Voyager is an impressive package—as long as those shoulders are strong. DAVE JOHNSON

Well Traveled: At 7.8 pounds, Unicent's Voyager 1330 notebook isn't exactly svelte, but it sports a 233MHz MMX Pentium and more.

FILEBOX

Voyager 1330

★★★★

Verdict: A notebook that has it all—power and components—in one well-designed package.

Pros: Large display; full suite of ports; built-in 56Kbps modem; good keyboard layout; long battery life.

Cons: Bulky at close to 8 pounds; anemic speakers.

Features As Tested: 233MHz MMX Pentium, 64MB of SDRAM, 512K cache, 4GB hard drive, 20X CD-ROM drive, 56Kbps fax modem, 16-bit audio, 13.3-inch active-matrix color display.

$2,999 est. street price
Unicent Technologies
(800) 320-1475, (216) 344-2649
Enter 974 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

WinBook XL

AMD's K6 Makes a Move

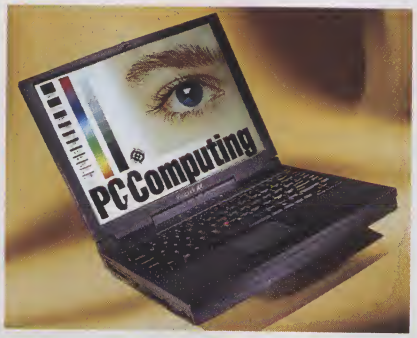
Intel inside? Not necessarily, if you get a WinBook XL. Besides serving up 32MB of RAM and a 2GB hard drive, WinBook's latest notebook computer is one of the first built around AMD's new 233MHz K6 MMX processor.

The number of advantages to choosing the K6 over the Pentium or vice versa is exactly zero. The 233MHz K6-equipped WinBook didn't outrun any of the 233MHz Pentium notebooks we've tested; it matched them. As for price, the K6 model is comparably priced to other Pentium notebooks we've looked at.

The WinBook XL delivers ample memory and storage space for today's demanding bloatware, and boasts a bright 12.1-inch active-matrix screen. Its floppy and 20-speed CD-ROM drives are internal, so no device-swapping is necessary.

The bad news is the software bundle—there isn't one, outside of Windows 95 with Internet Explorer 4.

Still, the WinBook XL offers great features for a competitive price. If you're indifferent to designer labels, the WinBook is a solid, affordable traveling machine. RICK BROIDA



Built to Travel: WinBook is one of the first to offer a portable with AMD's 233MHz MMX K6 CPU. The performance or price edge over a Pentium? Zero.

FILEBOX

WinBook XL

★★★

Verdict: An affordable portable with no Intel inside.

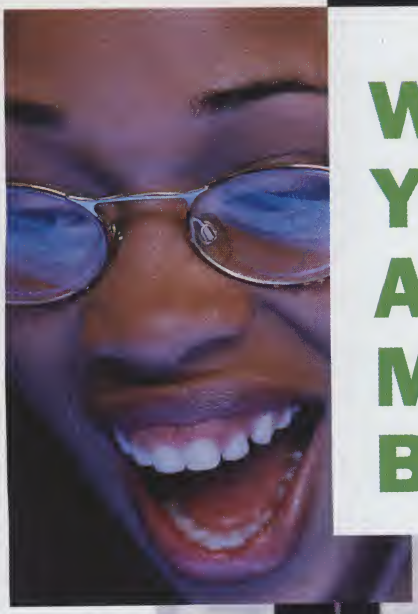
Pros: Generous configuration; built-in modem; entry-level price tag.

Cons: No software bundle other than Windows 95; no swappable bays.

Features As Tested: 233MHz AMD-K6 MMX CPU, 32MB of EDO RAM, 2GB hard drive, 20X CD-ROM drive, 56Kbps internal fax modem, 12.1-inch active-matrix display.

$2,283 est. street price
WinBook Corp.
(800) 965-5758
Enter 875 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*



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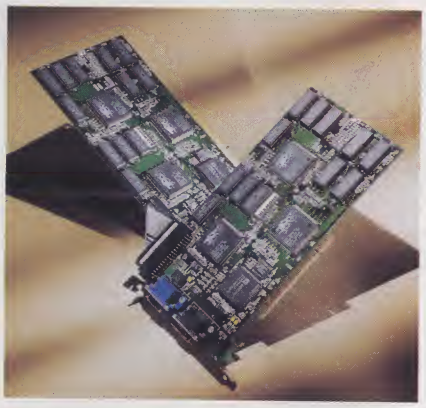
A Monster Dose of 3-D

There are people out there who live in a world of alpha blending and polygons, and occasionally surface for mundane things like food and drink. Diamond Multimedia's Monster 3D II is for them. This graphics board, based on the 3Dfx Voodoo 2 chip set, gives you top-notch 3-D. Like the original Monster 3D, it's an add-on to your existing graphics card that breathes real life into even the flattest 2-D boards.

The Monster 3D II clocks in at speeds three times faster than the original 3Dfx Voodoo boards. While it can't match the AGP power of Real 3D's Intel740-based StarFighter (see "Intel's 3-D Push," May, page 90), the new Monster 3D II's WinBench scores are right on the heels of Nvidia-based PCI boards like Diamond's own Viper V330. Onscreen, the Monster 3D II delivers smooth images and fluid movement. You can even connect two Monster 3D IIs for noticeably better game performance.

The Monster 3D II supports Direct3D, MiniGL, and 3Dfx proprietary Glide standards, so this board should deliver with most 3-D games. As with the original Monster 3D, its $250 price tag buys you a healthy bundle of games.

If you really want to reap the benefits of a Monster 3D II, you'll want to run it on a Pentium II system. And for the price, there are definitely faster stand-alone boards out there. But if you want the games and you want to give your 2-D board a boost, the Monster 3D II should be on your shortlist. **DAVID GERDING**



Rocket Boost: Give your old 2-D board a shot of 3-D power with Diamond's Monster 3D II. It clocks in at three times the speed of the original, and you can boost speeds by connecting two cards.

FILEBOX

Diamond Multimedia Monster 3D II

★★★★

Verdict: Only game nuts need apply for this fast 3-D board.

Pros: Zippy performance; great games and lots of them; works with your 2-D board.

Cons: Needs a Pentium II for top performance; pricey; still lags slightly behind the stand-alone boards out there.

$250 est. street price
Diamond Multimedia Systems
(800) 468-5846
Enter 879 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Cross Pen Computing Group CrossPad

Take Note

SNEAK PREVIEW

Nothing beats a pen and pad of paper for taking notes. If only you could jot down notes on your trusty yellow pad and transfer them magically to your PC.... Actually, now you can, with Cross's CrossPad pen and tablet combo.

With the CrossPad, you can take up to 50 pages of digital notes anywhere. It's great for sketches and illustrations too. Just place any standard-size (8.5-by-11-inch) pad of paper on the CrossPad digital tablet. Its stylish Cross pen writes in regular ink, but also has a transmitter in its tip. The pen transmits through the paper, and the tablet captures the signal. Voilà—digital ink.

You can time- and date-stamp your notes and mark keywords for easy search and retrieval. When you're done, transfer everything via cable to your PC. Use the bundled IBM Ink Manager to recognize, edit, fax, e-mail, print, or file your notes. You can train the CrossPad to decipher your penmanship—no matter how bad it is.

It takes about an hour to learn the system, and the results are well worth the effort. The CrossPad is easier to travel with than a bulky notebook—and much easier to write on. **LIESL LA GRANGE NOBLE**

No Typing Required: Jot down up to 50 pages of notes with this digital pen and pad combo that lets you write on real paper.

FILEBOX

CrossPad

★★★★

Verdict: Why type? Jot down important notes on this portable digital pad.

Pros: Uses real paper; quick and easy data transfer; very portable.

Cons: Requires a special pen, and don't lose or chew on it—a replacement costs $79.

$399 est. street price
Cross Pen Computing Group
(800) 510-9660
Enter 880 at
www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

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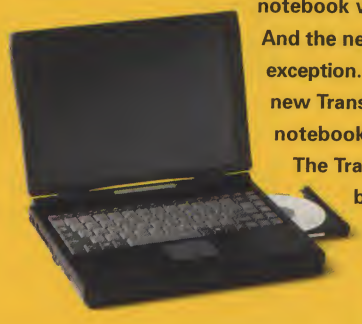
Geeks, experts and industry pundits all agree that Micron makes the world's best notebooks. We've won the coveted *PC Magazine's* Editors' Choice Award for practically every notebook we've ever released. And the new TransPort Trek is no exception. *PC World* just ranked the new TransPort Trek the #1 budget notebook available today. The TransPort Trek is the single best desktop replacement notebook you can buy.



PC WORLD TransPort Trek Apr 98

TransPort® Trek™

Common Features on all TransPort Systems:

- 512KB L2 pipeline burst cache
- PCI bus with 128-bit graphics accelerator
- USB, parallel, serial, VGA, PS/2, ports
- S-Video Out; MPEG compatible
- CardBus and Zoomed Video ready
- Wavetable/3D Positional sound
- Microphone, stereo line-in & line-out jacks
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††The TransPort Trek 166MHz system was ranked #1 by PC World, at the time of ranking the system was code-named "Micron Meridian."

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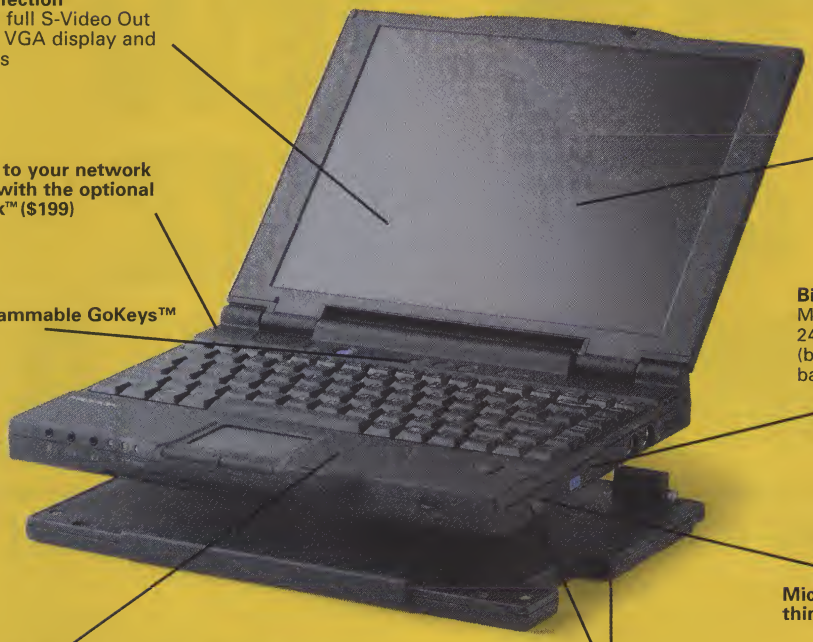

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- 12.1" SVGA active matrix display
- Powered by 128-bit graphics accelerator

Big Room for Expandability
Modular bay that accepts variable 24X CD-ROM drive & a 3.5" floppy (both included); and up to 3 hour bay battery (included)

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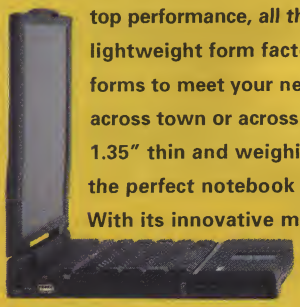

GoBook

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- 6.7 lbs (w/opt./base battery & floppy)
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- CardBus/Zoomed Video ready
- 16 bit stereo/Wavetable sound
- Microphone, stereo line in/out jacks
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Micron is so popular among the tech savvy set that the readers of *PC Week* just voted Micron #1 in overall customer satisfaction. Four out of five PC geeks (the fifth probably just builds their own) prefer Micron because they recognize Micron's engineering driven, award-winning product focus is unmatched in the PC industry. They also know that Micron systems are the most dependable. Micron uses the finest quality components that are backed up by our responsive and knowledgeable tech support and sales force – all at prices that you wouldn't expect to find from a top-tier $2 billion direct systems manufacturer.

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- 4.0GB Ultra ATA hard drive
- 17" Micron 700FGx, .26dp monitor (16"display)
- 82440LX chip set
- 512KB internal cache, 2MB flash BIOS
- 3.5" floppy drive
- 32X EIDE variable speed CD-ROM drive
- 128-bit AGP Diamond Viper V330 (nVidia), 4MB EDO SGRAM & MPEG
- Integrated 32-voice wavetable 3D stereo sound
- Advent AV009 stereo speakers
- 56K x2 data/fax modem*
- 104-key enhanced keyboard
- Microsoft® IntelliMouse™
- Microsoft Windows® 95 and Microsoft Plus!
- Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition
- 5-year/3-year Micron Power[sm] limited warranty

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- 17" Micron 700FGx, .26dp monitor (16"display)
- 82440BX chip set
- 512KB internal cache, 2MB flash BIOS
- 3.5" floppy drive
- 32X EIDE variable speed CD-ROM drive
- 128-bit AGP Diamond Viper V330 (nVidia), 4MB EDO SGRAM & MPEG
- Integrated 64-voice wavetable 3D stereo sound
- Advent AV009 stereo speakers
- 56K x2 data/fax modem*
- 104-key enhanced keyboard
- Microsoft IntelliMouse
- Microsoft Windows 95 and Microsoft Plus!
- Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition
- 5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty

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- 64MB PC100 SDRAM
- 8.4GB Ultra ATA hard drive
- Integrated 100MB Iomega Zip drive / 3.5" floppy drive
- DVD-ROM drive and PCI decoder card***

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Millennia 400

- Intel 400MHz Pentium II processor
- 32MB PC100 SDRAM
- 4.0GB Ultra ATA hard drive
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- 512KB internal cache, 2MB flash BIOS
- 3.5" floppy drive
- 32X EIDE variable speed CD-ROM drive
- 128-bit AGP Diamond Viper V330 (nVidia), 4MB EDO SGRAM & MPEG
- Integrated 64-voice wavetable 3D stereo sound
- Advent AV009 stereo speakers
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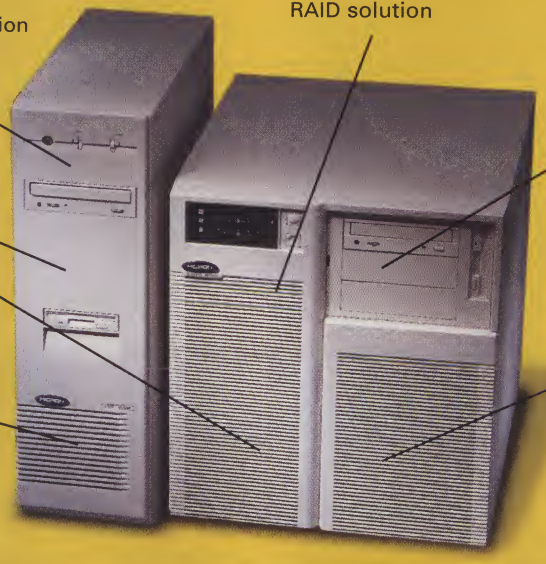
- SVGA video



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THE NEW NETFRAME 3100 SETS A NEW STANDARD FOR ENTRY-LEVEL PC SERVERS.

While fully loaded systems aren't always needed at first, the ability for a server to grow as your business grows is critical. The new NetFRAME® 3100 provides that upgrade path. It incorporates mid-range features like hot swap hard drives, convenient remote management technology and a highly integrated motherboard. It also features the 440BX chip set -- Intel's latest chip set technology supporting 100MHz front side bus and 100MHz SDRAM. Combined with the fastest processors available, this server offers networked businesses the performance of a dependable mid-range server at an entry-level price.

NetFRAME LV2000
Small Business Server Edition

- Intel 233MHz Pentium II processor
- Dual processor capable
- 64MB ECC SDRAM
- *4GB Ultra-Wide* SCSI-3 hard drive
- Microsoft® Small Business Server 4.0 (10 user license)
- NOS support (3 first-year incident resolutions), 7x24
- 512KB integrated L2 ECC cache
- 5 expansion slots: 4 PCI, 1 ISA
- Integrated Adaptec PCI Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 controller
- Intel EtherExpress Pro 100 network adapter
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- Intel LANDesk® Server Manager
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- NOS support (3 first-year incident resolutions), 7x24
- Intel 440BX PCI chip set
- 512KB integrated L2 ECC cache
- 100MHz front side Bus
- Integrated Symbios Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 dual channel controller
- RAID capable
- 5 expansion slots: 3 PCI, 1 ISA, 1 shared PCI/ISA
- 8 drive bays: 1 external 3.5", 2 external 5.25"
- 5 hot-swap hard drive bays
- 32X EIDE CD-ROM drive
- Integrated SVGA graphics (2MB)
- Integrated Intel 10/100 Ethernet
- Intel LANDesk Server Manager
- Dedicated server technical support, 7x24
- 5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty
- 1-year next-business-day on-site service**

$4,299
Bus. Lease $136/mo

NetFRAME MV5000

- Intel 233MHz Pentium II processor
- Dual processor capable
- 64MB ECC SDRAM
- 4GB Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 hard drive
- Microsoft Windows NT Server 4.0 (10 user license)
- NOS support (3 first-year incident resolutions), 7x24
- 512KB integrated L2 ECC cache
- Memory: ECC, EDO or SDRAM option
- 9 expansion slots: 6 PCI, 2 ISA, 1 shared ISA/PCI
- Dual Integrated Symbios Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 controller, 1 narrow
- Intel EtherExpress Pro 100 network adapter
- 32X EIDE CD-ROM drive
- RAID capable
- 5 internal, hot-pluggable, hard drive array bays (upgradable to 10)
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New! SOFTWARE: Adobe Systems Photoshop 5.0

Picture-perfect Results

SNEAK PREVIEW

Wouldn't it be nice to review your life, see the past mistakes, then get the chance to go back and fix them? It's too much to ask for in reality, but not in Adobe Photoshop 5.0. This latest version provides a nice twist on multiple undos. Add spruced-up color-management tools and a few tweaks, and Photoshop 5.0 is a more complete digital darkroom than ever.

Back in Time Photoshop 5.0 lets you step back through its many layers with the History palette, an interactive list of all the changes you've made to an image. You can jump back to any step along the way to simply view it, or delete all the steps that follow it. It's a great feature, but one with limits—you can't selectively rewrite history. If you re-edit the image at a certain step, it eliminates all the subsequent steps and starts a new series of steps. And as you use more memory, older actions drop from the palette. It's not a revolutionary feature—Micrografx's Picture Publisher has had a similar feature for some time. But it is an important one, and a key reason for Photoshop users to upgrade.

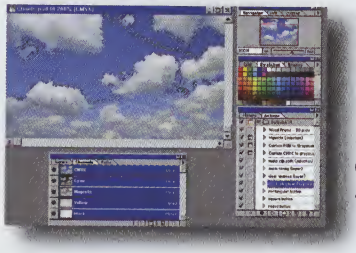
Photoshop 5.0 has newfound flexibility for text editing too. The program creates a type layer when you enter text, and you can edit this text at the character level with the usual range of options, including font, size, color, kerning, leading, and alignment. There's also a new live preview of the changes you make and a vertical type tool (with double-byte support for Asian characters). In all, the improved text tools strengthen a weak link in previous editions.

Remake History: Adobe Photoshop 5.0 improves on an already good thing with a few sorely needed features. The new History palette keeps a log of every move you make and lets you tweak only where you need it.

A. **Take a snapshot** of your work at any point during editing for future reference.

B. Change one action, and you **alter the course** of your image.

C. The History palette **links to other palettes** to show you what you did where.



Mix and Match: Photoshop finally brings complete color management to version 5.0, with support for spot color, more palettes, and 48- and 64-bit images.

Multicolor Photoshop 5.0 doesn't skimp on its bread-and-butter image quality, either—particularly its color quality. Complementing its proprietary color-management system, a standard in its own right, Photoshop 5.0 adds support for graphics industry–standard International Color Consortium (ICC) device profiles. It also supports the new sRGB standard proposed by Microsoft and Hewlett-Packard. In both cases, you get more ways to achieve consistent color among monitors, printers, and scanners. For designers itching to use specialty colors like metallic inks, Adobe adds spot-color support and extends its support for 48- and 64-bit images, allowing even greater color fidelity.

There are also some nice smaller touches in this version. A new measuring tool shows you the distance between two points, and new magnetic tools make it easier to follow the edges of images. You can add live effects like shadows and glows to a layer with a new automation plug-in. And a new application program interface for automated plug-ins promises more of the same from third parties.

At a steep street price of $699 (or $199 to upgrade), Adobe leaves lots of room for able and undercutting competitors such as Micrografx Picture Publisher and Corel Photo-Paint. And the program could still use more Web features. But Photoshop 5.0 nonetheless solidifies Adobe's position as the reigning champ in high-end image editing, especially for print and prepress work.

CHRIS O'MALLEY

FILEBOX

Adobe Photoshop 5.0

★★★★★

Verdict: A complete digital darkroom for the pros.

Pros: Excellent all-around image editing; new edit tracking; much-improved text handling; extensive color management.

Cons: Still few Web publishing and multimedia features; still very expensive; History palette is limited by memory.

Competition: Corel Photo-Paint and Micrografx Picture Publisher compete on features, are easier to use, and are much less costly. However, neither offers as much precision and as many plug-in extensions for professional-level work.

System Requirements: Windows 95 or NT 4.0, Pentium CPU, 32MB of RAM, 80MB of hard disk space, CD-ROM drive.

$699 est. street price, $199 for upgrade
Adobe Systems
(800) 492-3623
Enter 883 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

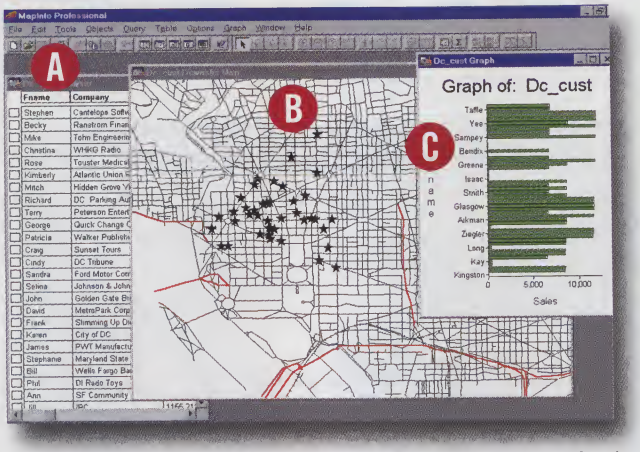
Give Your Business Direction

Feeling a bit lost? Can't get your business on the map? MapInfo Professional 4.5 serves up sophisticated mapping features for pointing your business in the right direction. Use it to provide information about the number of customers within a mile of your business, or the store locations that might result in the strongest sales. You can even track such things as the spread of an oil spill. In this new version, MapInfo remains a powerful geographic information system (GIS) and adds a host of ease-of-use enhancements and import features.

All over the Map MapInfo reads database files and uses their geographic information (street address, zip code, and so forth) to place individual records on a map. It's like an electronic map with pushpins. With a database on the map, use the program to make geographic queries. For example, have MapInfo draw a circle and find the number of customers living within five miles of a store.

As before, MapInfo competently builds thematic maps that use colors to indicate a value for an area. For example, a thematic map might represent the populations in California's counties by color. You'll find plenty of options, such as representing data with colors, symbols, and line types, and you can precisely assign these elements to ranges. Ready to chart your results? Fire up the program's powerful graph module.

A handy redistricting tool takes time to learn but helps you analyze and redraw regions, which is useful when evaluating sales territories. Buffer tools let you establish ranges around locations to see the effective range of a radio station, for example. MapInfo also offers a powerful tool that traces map features, and strong labeling options to identify various types of data.

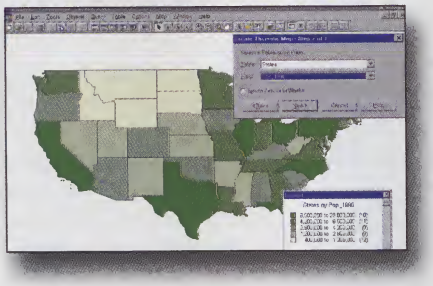


Where Are You? MapInfo Professional 4.5 is a powerful and precise mapping package. It's a good choice for scientists and business users.

A. Import data from your favorite database source.

B. Place your records onto a map to view them geographically.

C. Create charts with ease, for additional graphical representation of your data.



Comparison-Shop: Build maps that compare and contrast one area against another.

View from the Top MapInfo does a great job of working with and managing layers, so it's a breeze to combine different maps and pictures. Using this feature, you can place vector map data on top of raster aerial photographs. The program includes a host of basic drawing tools, and you can drag and drop completed maps and charts into Microsoft Word, Excel, or PowerPoint documents. Also, a new Report Wizard makes easy work of creating customized reports.

MapInfo accepts files from Borland dBase, Microsoft Access, Lotus 1-2-3, and ASCII, as well as those from ODBC-compliant databases. Version 4.5 also comes with a utility for converting data from AutoCAD, Intergraph, and ESRI ArcView GIS, saving you from needing other tools.

The Microsoft Office–style interface helps make a powerful and complex program fairly intuitive. The documentation is clear and well-written, but there's a lot of it, so it can be intimidating. For newcomers, there's a tutorial that introduces basic features, along with some sample map data. Chances are, however, you'll need to buy additional data, which can be costly. Developers should purchase the optional MapBasic programming language to integrate MapInfo features into their applications.

ESRI's ArcView GIS is a formidable competitor to MapInfo Professional. It offers comparable features and bundles its own programming language. But MapInfo is easier to understand and use. Business users may want to consider ESRI's BusinessMap Pro, which offers similar business-oriented features at a lower price. But when you want to analyze anything from a geographic perspective, MapInfo Pro helps put you on the map. **WAYNE KAWAMOTO**

FILEBOX

MapInfo Professional 4.5

★★★★

Verdict: Powerful precision mapping/GIS package for professional scientific and business needs.

Pros: Flexible thematic maps; powerful queries; strong import features; redistricting and buffer tools.

Cons: Developer's package not included; additional data packs are expensive.

Competition: ESRI ArcView GIS offers comparable features and includes a development package, but it's harder to learn and use. ESRI BusinessMap Pro costs just $150 and offers business-oriented features that are easier to use, but they are not as flexible or as powerful as those in MapInfo.

$1,295 est. street price
MapInfo Corp.
(800) 327-8627, (518) 285-6000
Enter 884 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

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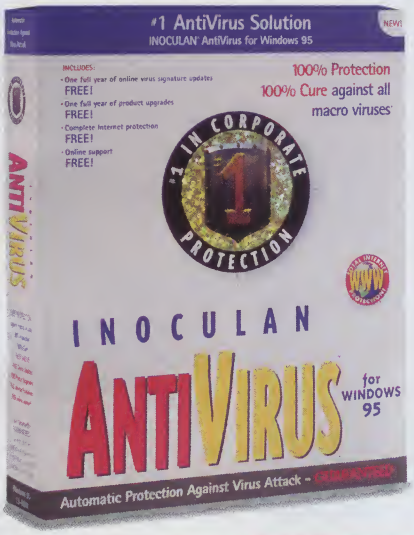

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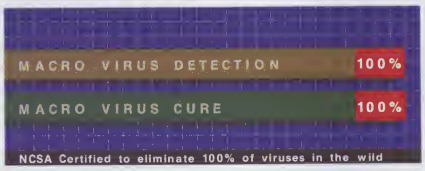

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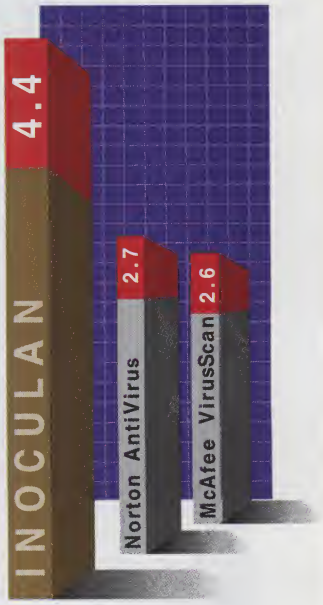

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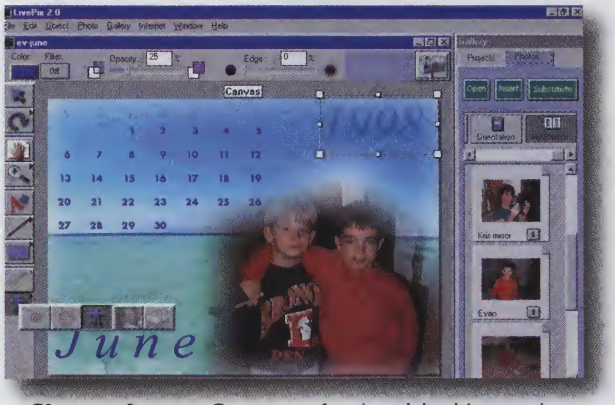
Teach Your Photos New Tricks

SNEAK PREVIEW

You've got a pile of digital images on your hard drive—now what? Let LivePix 2.0 Deluxe give you some good ideas. Version 2 offers tried-and-true photo-editing tools, and some great new ones, that let you store and catalog images, enhance them, and—most important—drop them into a variety of projects you can print or e-mail.

Choose from over 200 projects, including calendars, posters, and invitations, all with colorful templates. Place your photo in the template, arrange and crop it, and add your own personal touches. LivePix is so simple that even kids can have fun with it. With add-on template packs on the way, the sky's the limit.



Sharper Image: Create professional-looking projects like calendars and brochures with LivePix 2.0 Deluxe.

For bare-bones editing, LivePix includes a suite of image-editing tools like a red-eye reducer, distortion tools, and even a clone tool. Print out completed projects, post them on the Internet, or send your handiwork via e-mail with the integrated Novita LiveLetter.

LivePix 2.0 is sometimes sluggish, even on a 200MHz Pentium. However, its native FlashPix format makes it faster at some tasks, such as resizing images, than bitmap-based editors like Microsoft Picture It and Adobe PhotoDeluxe. Overall, LivePix 2.0 offers the best of both worlds—family fun and a no-nonsense photo editor in one package. **DAVE JOHNSON**

FILEBOX

LivePix 2.0 Deluxe

★★★★

Verdict: The most fun you can have with your digital images.

Pros: Smart templates offer near-professional results; lots of easy projects.

Cons: Huge stock images can take forever to redraw; more emphasis on fun than function.

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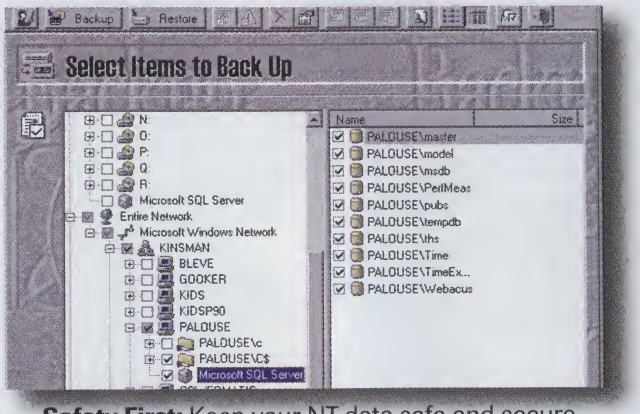
Bulletproof NT Backups

Still using the backup applet included with Windows NT? Can you say with 100 percent confidence that when you need a file, you know it's archived on a backup tape? Seagate's Backup Exec 7.0 for Windows NT attacks the shortcomings of version 6.0 and provides the insurance policy you need to know your data is safe and secure.

If you're planning to do enterprise-wide backup, Exec 7.0's new wizards walk you through the entire process, helping you configure a rigorous backup strategy. A Media Rotation Wizard tracks tapes and automates the process of creating grandfather/father/son backup sets. In the past, Cheyenne's ArcServe reigned supreme when it came to media tracking. But Exec 7.0 is so user-friendly that it goes above and beyond ArcServe.



Safety First: Keep your NT data safe and secure with Seagate's easy-to-use Backup Exec 7.0.

For an additional charge, Seagate Software provides option packs like Intelligent Disaster Recovery (IDR) for online backup of Microsoft SQL Server and Exchange Server. IDR also provides a way to restore a damaged NT server, saving you from reinstalling the entire operating system. Plus a new Autoloader option supports popular autoloaders and bar-coding systems.

For industrial-strength backup for your Windows NT servers, give Backup Exec 7.0 a try. The new version is extremely powerful yet easy to use. CHRIS KINSMAN

FILEBOX

Seagate Backup Exec 7.0 for Windows NT

★★★★

Verdict: A powerful but easy way to back up enterprise data.

Pros: Strong media rotation.

Cons: Need to make several undocumented changes to NT.

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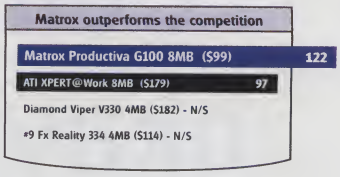

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matrox

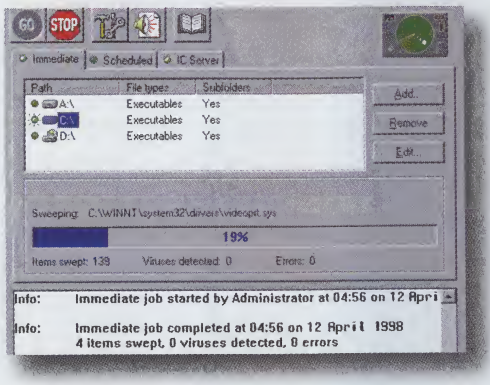
Infolink 153 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

One Step Ahead of an NT Virus

The biggest threat to your NT network is a virus-infected file. To save your files from whatever lurks on your network, Sophos Anti-Virus 3.0 delivers the tools to flag infected and potentially dangerous files.

To lighten the load on administrators, Anti-Virus automatically updates client workstations with the newest software and virus signatures.

When Anti-Virus detects an intrusion, it provides an alert via e-mail to the administrator. The program fixes boot-sector files, and files infected by known macro viruses, but can't repair all infected files. Since Anti-Virus offers options only to move or delete infected files, administrators are left with the task of manually restoring files from backups.



Protection: Is your network safe? Stop viruses from infiltrating your NT network with the $895 Sophos Anti-Virus 3.0.

According to Sophos, this is the only way to ensure that infected files are truly clean, a fact that we agree with—however, other antivirus utilities offer file-repair features.

Installation is straightforward, but the documentation could do a better job of explaining the server setup.

Sophos Anti-Virus 3.0 supports DOS, Microsoft Windows 3.*x*, 95, and NT, among others, and offers solid, convenient virus detection. But the lack of an option to repair all infected files will be a turnoff to administrators who prefer to have this option.

WAYNE KAWAMOTO

FILEBOX

Sophos Anti-Virus 3.0

★★★

Verdict: Solid antivirus software that detects without being intrusive, but can't repair files without manual intervention.

Pros: Easy to install across a network; can set up client workstations to update new files on the server automatically and transparently.

Cons: Can't repair infected files automatically—administrators must restore files from backups manually.

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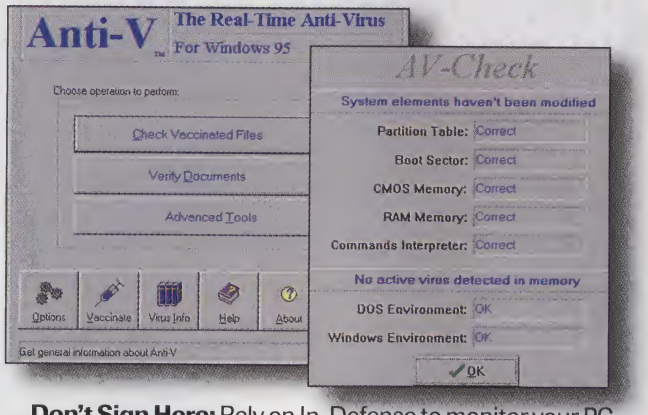
Keep Your PC Virus-Free

Viruses are more than annoying—they're downright dangerous. One rogue virus can ruin your whole system or your entire server. Who can afford that risk? Tegam's In-Defense offers an innovative approach that'll make the head honchos sit up and take notice.

Tegam named its product for the technology dubbed In-Defense. Rather than scanning for virus signatures, In-Defense monitors your system for suspicious activities that indicate viruses at work, at which point it stops them dead in their tracks. The upside? You never have to update signature files.

Besides monitoring for activities that modify executable files and indicate macro viruses, In-Defense checks your PC at startup, takes snapshots of all executable files so it can restore them, and backs up the boot sector, CMOS, and Master Boot Record. In-Defense is a bit more costly than the competition; however, you don't need to pay for any signature updates over time.



Don't Sign Here: Rely on In-Defense to monitor your PC for old and new viruses, without signature file updates.

In-Defense correctly alerted us of every test virus and prevented it from loading, and we experienced no false alarms. However, we also ran identical tests using TouchStone's PC-cillin, and it alerted us to the same viruses.

In-Defense shows promise. But until new viruses come along, it's too early to tell how well this technology really works. WAYNE KAWAMOTO

FILEBOX

Tegam In-Defense

★★★

Verdict: Stop viruses before they stop you.

Pros: No need for signature files or definition updates; works invisibly in the background.

Cons: Technology not yet certified by an independent lab; expensive.

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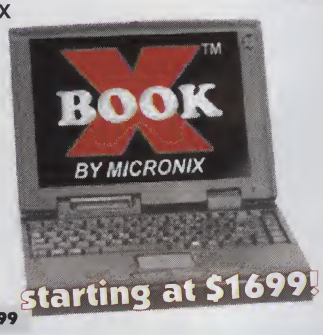

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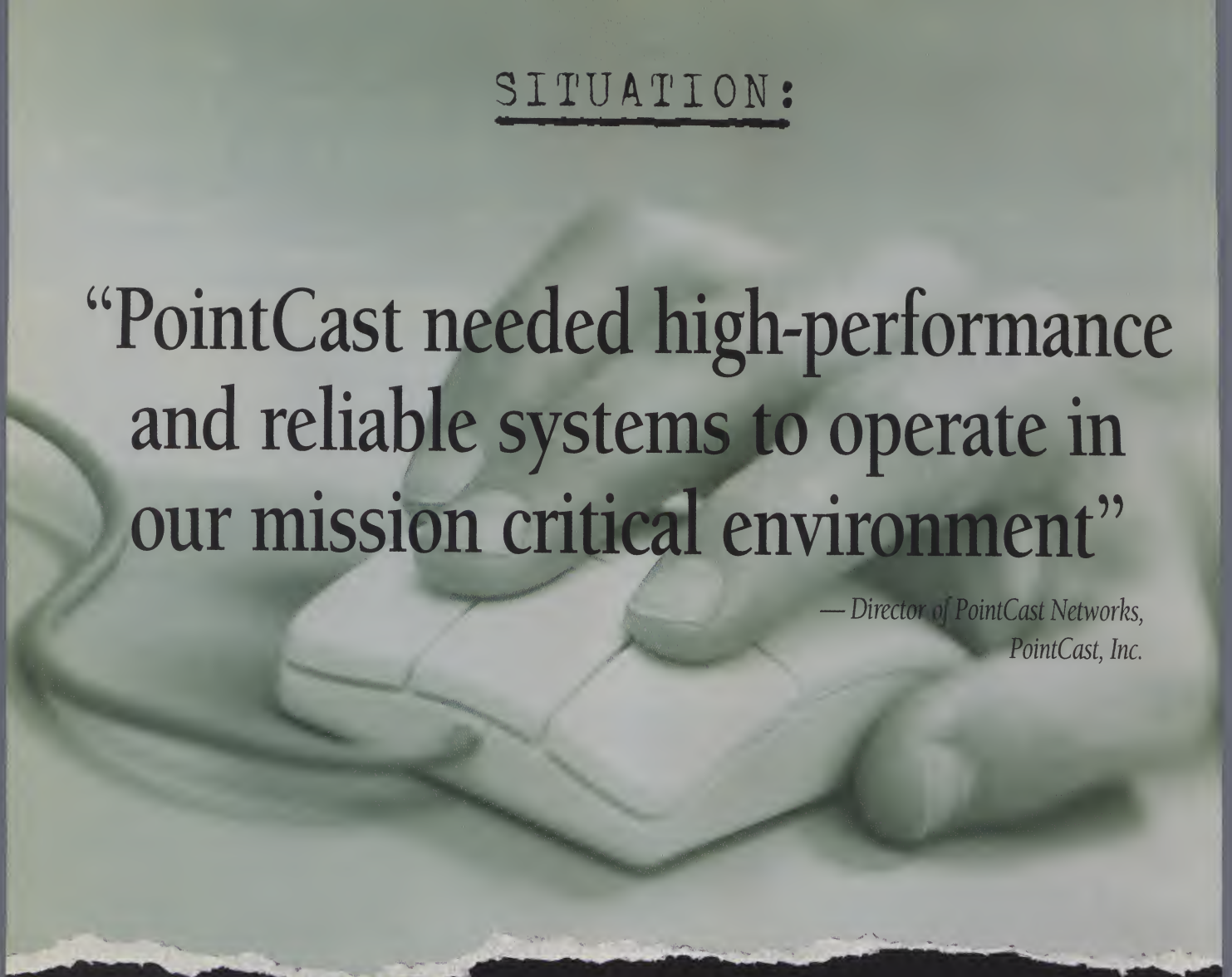

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- NEW Intel Express 3D 4Mb Video
- Keyboard, Floppy, Mouse
- Mid Tower Chassis

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- 32Mb SDRAM
- Slots 4 PCI 3 ISA BX Chipset
- 2.1Gb Ultra DMA Drive
- Sony 32x CD-ROM
- #9 Reality 4Mb Video
- Keyboard, Floppy, Mouse
- Desktop Case

$895

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- 1 Intel Pentium Pro 200
- 512KB Cache, Up to 4 CPU's
- 64MB ECC Exp. To 2GB
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- Adaptec 2940UW LVD
- #9 Reality 4Mb Video
- Intel 10/100 Ethernet
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- Server Management Software & Alarm Avail.
- Rackmount Solution Available

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- 64Mb SDRAM
- Slots 4 PCI 2 ISA BX Chipset
- Integrated Adaptec UW SCSI
- Integrated Intel 10/100 Ethernet
- Integrated Video
- Intel Server Mgt Hardware
- Q:(3) - 4.5Gb 10,000 RPM Removable SCSI
- Raid 5, 3 Channel controller 16Mb Cache
- Sony 32x CD-ROM
- Keyboard, Floppy, Mouse
- 12 Bay Tower Chassis 400 Watt Power

$6099

STF DUAL PII 400/BX

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- 512Kb Cache, Upgr. To 2 CPU's
- 64Mb SDRAM
- Slots 4 PCI 2 ISA BX Chipset
- Integrated Adaptec UW SCSI
- Integrated Intel 10/100 Ethernet
- Integrated Video
- Intel Server Mgt Hardware
- 9Gb LVD 10,000 RPM ST39102LW (5.0ms)
- Sony 32x CD-ROM
- #9 Revolution 8Mb Video
- Keyboard, Floppy, Mouse
- 12 Bay Tower Chassis 400 Watt Power

$3587

SAMPLE RAID 5 SUBSYSTEMS – ALL SYSTEMS CUSTOM BUILT

STC 8000 RAID 5

- 2-Channel RAID UW Controller
- 8 Hot-swappable Drive Bays
- 2-300 Watt N+1 Red. Power Supplies
- 32 MB Cache
  - Internal temperature status
  - Power supply status
  - Cooling fan status
  - Visual and audible alarm

18GB Solution
- Q: (4) 4.5GB 10,000RPM UW HD: $6795

27GB Solution
- Q: (3) 9.1GB 7200RPM UW HD: $6820

54GB Solution
- Q: (3) 18GB 7200RPM UW HD: $9125

STC2000 20 BAY SINGLE

- 4 Channel RAID 5 UW Controllers
- 20 Hot Swappable Drive Bays
- 8 - 230 Watt Hot Redund. Power Supplies
- 32MB of Cache
  - Internal temperature status
  - Power supply status
  - Cooling fan status
  - Visual and audible alarm

144GB Solution
- Q: (8) 18GB 7200RPM UW HD: $20,285

72GB Solution
- Q: (8) 9.1GB 10,000RPM UW HD: $15,910

32GB Solution
- Q: (8) 4.3GB 72000RPM UW HD: $12,995

STC 2000 20 BAY

- Active/Active Controllers
- Q: (2) 4 Channel RAID 5 UW Controllers
- 8 - 230 Watt Hot Redund. Power Supplies
- 128MB of Cache
  - Internal temperature status
  - Power supply status
  - Cooling fan status
  - Visual and audible alarm

144GB Solution
- Q: (8) 18GB 7200RPM UW HD: $25,560

72GB Solution
- Q: (8) 9.1GB 10,000RPM UW HD: $21,359

32GB Solution
- Q: (8) 4.3GB 72000RPM UW HD: $17,695

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Small-Office Secret Weapon

SNEAK PREVIEW

Setting up your own small-office intranet doesn't have to be a science project. In fact, it can be as easy as plugging in a bright blue box and running a setup program—which is the magic of Cobalt Microserver's $999 Qube Microserver 2700D, an all-in-one Web server and intranet box. The Qube offers everything you need to host an intranet: a 150MHz MIPS CPU, 16MB of RAM, a 2.1GB hard drive, a 10Base-T Ethernet connection—plus a raft of software for setting up and managing your intranet. The whole show runs on Linux 2.0, a freeware operating system you set up and control using any Web browser.

Bright Blue Box: Set up an intranet in record time. Cobalt Microserver's $999 Qube Microserver 2700D comes with all the hardware and software you need.

Back to Basics As a thin server, the Qube can't match the performance of a high-end multiprocessor machine. Then again, the Qube doesn't match the cost and complexity of such a system either. The box itself is spare: On the front, a single indicator light tells you when the server is on or off; on the back there's an LCD console, a 10Base-T Ethernet connector, a PCI slot, and a power socket.

To get started, simply plug the Qube into an existing Ethernet network, power it on, and point your browser to its preconfigured address—all administration is browser-based, so you'll never see the underlying guts of Linux (unless you really want to). From your browser it's easy to configure user profiles, establish file sharing, and build workgroup applications.

The Qube comes in several flavors. Beyond the $999 bare-bones 2700D model, the 2700WG workgroup model (which ranges in price from $1,249 to $1,449) includes a full suite of communication and collaboration services for workgroups. In addition to Linux 2.0 and Apache 1.2.5 Web Server, the workgroup model includes POP3 e-mail services; drag-and-drop file sharing; FTP and DNS servers; the ability to conduct private, threaded discussions; as well as document indexing and searching.

Linux Inside: The Qube Microserver is powered by Linux 2.0, a stable and free Unix-based operating system.

Trade-offs But cost and complexity aren't the only things the Qube gives up compared with typical servers. Performance is slower, and you can't serve Windows applications from this Unix-based box. There's also no parallel port, so forget about having it double as a print server. You can, however, compile and install just about any Linux program on the Qube. While the early, pre-production unit we reviewed wasn't yet ready for intensive performance testing, the Qube should support up to 100 active users, handling 140,000 e-mail messages, 50,000 file transfers, and 250,000 simultaneous page requests.

To be sure, the Qube is an *intra*net server. If you want to use it to host Web sites, you'll need a router to connect it to the Net, more horsepower, a firewall, and a secure Web server—none of which comes with the Qube. However, Cobalt is working on adding these features to a future product. In the meantime, the Qube Microserver 2700D is a great choice for serving intranet data to a small business or a workgroup. **RICH SCHWERIN**

FILEBOX

Qube Microserver 2700D

★★★★

Verdict: An affordable and practical all-in-one intranet box. Looks sharp too.

Pros: Inexpensive; simple setup and use; includes all the basics for a small intranet.

Cons: Lacks features found in typical servers, including multiple processors; Unix-based operating system can't serve Windows apps.

Competition: The Qube competes head-to-head against Microtest's $1,595 WebZerver ("All-You-Need Intranet Kit," November 1997, page 154) and Compact Devices' $695 Twister Intranet Server ("Make an Instant Intranet," July 1997, page 110), both of which offer less than the Qube. Cisco's $899 Micro Webserver includes an Iomega Zip drive and external SCSI storage, which are not included with the Qube.

Features As Tested: Linux 2.0, 150MHz MIPS CPU, 16MB of RAM, 2.1GB hard drive, 10Base-T Ethernet connection.

$999 est. street price
Cobalt Microserver
(888) 702-6225, (650) 930-2500
Enter 899 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

Build the Ultimate E-Commerce Site

SNEAK PREVIEW

So you want to set up shop on the Internet. Here's a list of just *some* of the things you'll need: site design software, a Web server, site maintenance and analysis tools, and commerce software for order processing and secure transactions. Plus you will need to carve out time to manage and maintain the site.

OK, relax and take a breath—it doesn't have to be that hard. At least not if you choose Microsoft Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition, which pulls together almost everything you need to set up shop and sell stuff on the Web.

Open for Business Shipping with full versions of Microsoft's FrontPage 98, Visual InterDev 1.0, and the Windows NT 4.0 Options Pack, Site Server is an everything-but-the-kitchen-sink solution.

There are more than a few new features in the latest version of Site Server, including new analysis tools to create more in-depth traffic and sales reports. Site Server also includes tools to help with the arduous task of creating a Web site from scratch. For small to medium-size projects you can use FrontPage 98 to create your content; larger projects require Visual InterDev. Once your project is off the ground, the Content Analyzer scans your HTML code, then points out broken links and alerts you to outdated information on your Web pages.

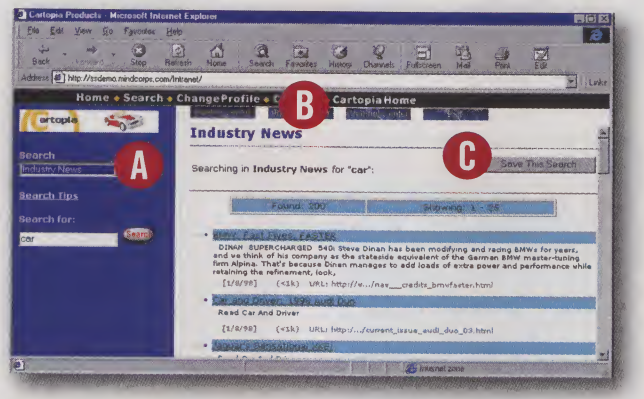
New server-side technologies such as push channels are also supported and easy to put to work in Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition. Creating an Active Channel, for example, is just a matter of entering data and the client update interval schedule. The improved Site Server Search feature makes hunting for information even more precise. You can search through documents by using words and phrases in addition to compound Boolean queries. But just because it sounds simple doesn't mean it's strictly a simpleton feature. Rather than just looking for basic data, Site Server Search takes note of important identifiers, such as the topic and author of a document, while indexing each document. The end result? Customers find exactly what they're looking for on your site.

Profit Power So Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition has everything you need for a commerce site, right? Well, not quite. Unfortunately, to make the most of Site Server, you need Microsoft SQL Server (which starts at $1,399). This is where things get a bit more complex.

After entering your contact information, tax considerations, payment methods, shipping and handling fees, and other data into the program, the Commerce Site Builder Wizard automatically generates the site. All that's left is the trivial but time-consuming task of entering your product inventory into SQL Server. Similarly, the other commerce features in Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition have been updated to handle the latest advances. For example, Ad Server lets you manage banner advertisements on your Web page. And by analyzing hits based on the users' interests, Ad Server displays banner ads that are more likely to appeal to your customers.

Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition isn't for everyone. While other e-commerce Web server packages like the Internet Factory Merchant Builder, Netscape SuiteSpot, and iCat Electronic Commerce Suite can't match all of Site Server's features, they're less expensive and less complicated to maintain. But if you're a Windows NT shop, Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition is the best all-in-one solution around.

JONATHAN J. CHAU

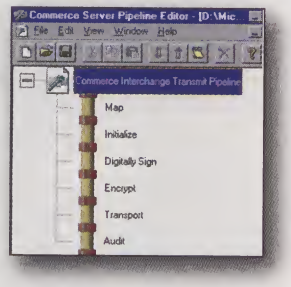


Sell Out: You don't have to hire a swat team of network managers just to set up shop online. Microsoft's Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition has everything you need to build, maintain, and grow an online e-commerce site.

A. Build powerful search features directly into your site.

B. Let visitors personalize their surfing experience.

C. It's easy to **save your searches** for future use.



Check's in the Mail: Create powerful order-processing rules with the visual Pipeline Editor in Microsoft Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition—a great way to track each step in the e-commerce process.

FILEBOX

Microsoft Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition

★★★★★

Verdict: Everything your company needs to do business online in a single package.

Pros: Powerful NT-based Internet server with all the features you need; tight security; easy to maintain once installed.

Cons: Lofty software and hardware requirements; complicated installation routine if you want to tap the most sophisticated features; non-NT shops will have to look elsewhere.

Competition: Netscape SuiteSpot, a Web server suite, is more cost-effective but offers fewer features. ICat's Electronic Commerce Suite contains most of the same features as Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition and is less expensive, but less intuitive.

Price not set
Microsoft Corp.
(800) 426-9400, (425) 882-8080
Enter 900 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

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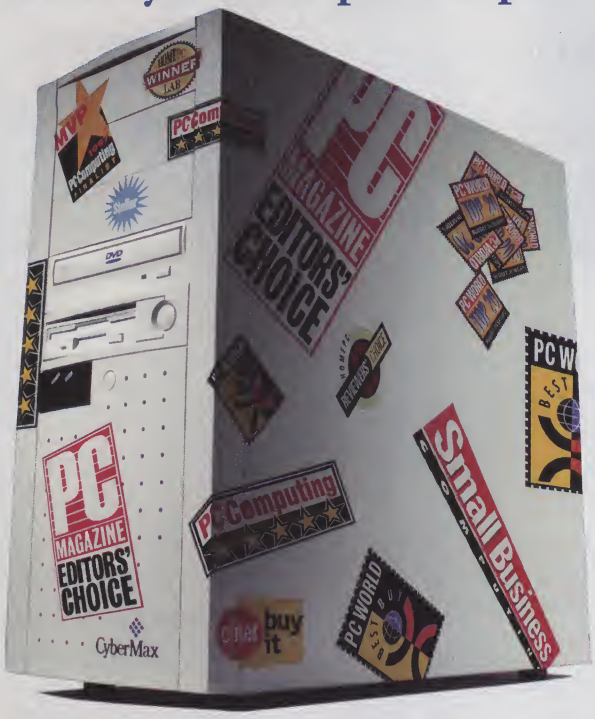

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Infolink 336 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Network Your Small Office

Small-office networking isn't just for wireheads anymore. A pair of new SOHO networking hubs from 3Com and Ramp Networks give you easy Internet and remote access, and both let your entire office connect to the Net using a single account.

Which one you choose just depends on how you want to get there. If ISDN or leased line is your speed, choose 3Com's $1,995 OfficeConnect Gateway 535, an ISDN gateway that includes firewall security and IP/IPX support. Smaller offices with telecommuters are better off with Ramp Networks' $599 WebRamp M3T, a four-port 10Base-T Ethernet hub that includes three serial ports for external modems.

Get on the Net: Setting up Internet and remote access for your small office doesn't have to hurt. Ramp Networks' $599 WebRamp M3T (left) is an amazing bargain, while 3Com's $1,995 OfficeConnect Gateway 535 is a great hub choice for ISDN and leased-line connections.

Simple Simon: Configuring Ramp Networks' WebRamp M3T is a snap when you use Ramp's CD-ROM–based software.

Get Connected Provided you already have ISDN or leased-line service, setting up and installing the OfficeConnect Gateway 535 is no big deal. A wizard helps you through service provider ID (SPID) configuration, line provisioning, and general installation. Then, depending on your LAN environment, the OfficeConnect offers an IP/IPX gateway (essential for NetWare shops), an IP router, and network address translation (NAT) features. Unlike the WebRamp, which supports only 10Mbps Ethernet and doesn't include a separate phone jack, the OfficeConnect boasts a 10/100Mbps network interface card (NIC) and an RJ-11 jack, should you want to attach a phone, a fax, or an answering machine.

If your office is on a leased line, your Internet connection is probably persistent. But for those of you using ISDN, the OfficeConnect includes a nifty cost-control feature that disconnects your unit during periods of inactivity. There's also a tariff-management feature that stops useless packets from clogging up your line.

Ready, Set, Go! Thanks to the hand-holding WebRamp Wiz, connecting and configuring the WebRamp M3T is simple. WebRamp's EasyIP, a Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) utility, automatically assigns an IP address to the unit. But WebRamp's magic comes from a bandwidth-boosting technique called Connection Optimized Link Technology (COLT).

COLT speeds up your Web surfing by spreading traffic among all three modems, making them work as one. Think of it as a traffic cop that always routes vehicles into the fastest available lane. While Ramp Networks' COLT is proprietary, it works with any modem and any ISP to produce better-than-ISDN speeds over regular analog lines, at a fraction of the cost and hassle. Plus it's a great way for everyone on your network to share one Internet account without slowing down your surfing. One caveat: COLT doesn't work when you download FTP files.

The WebRamp also receives calls from telecommuters, who can connect for file and print sharing as well as Internet access. Unfortunately, if all three modems are occupied with inbound connections, the unit can't connect outbound to the Internet.

Both the OfficeConnect Gateway 535 and the WebRamp M3T are good choices for adding remote and Internet access to small offices, and both make it easy for many users to share a single Internet account. Beyond the basics, choose the OfficeConnect if yours is an ISDN or leased-line shop. Smaller sites with analog lines will do just fine with the WebRamp. RICH SCHWERIN

FILEBOX

OfficeConnect Gateway 535

★★★★★

Verdict: Plug it in and get fast Internet access for everyone in your small office.

Pros: Easy installation; supports 10Mbps and 100Mbps Ethernet; IP/IPX gateway feature; NAT support.

Cons: Rudimentary firewall features.

$1,995 est. street price
3Com
(800) 638-3266, (408) 764-5000
Enter 901 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

WebRamp M3T

★★★★

Verdict: The best choice for small offices that crave Net and telecommuter access.

Pros: Inexpensive; easy configuration; COLT support means faster browsing and better return on investment.

Cons: 10Mbps Ethernet only.

$599 est. street price
Ramp Networks
(888) 493-2726, (408) 988-5353
Enter 902 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

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-Bradley Touchstone, architect, Elliot, Marshall and Innes, Inc.

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Competitive Upgrade $149.95

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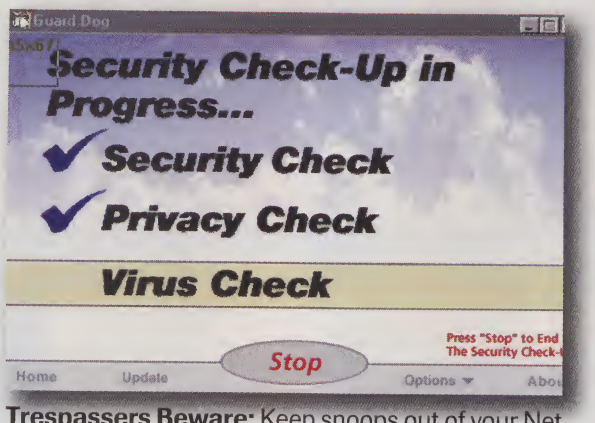
Browser's Best Friend

You're not alone. And if you spend any time on the Internet, chances are you're being watched too. If you don't want your privacy compromised by cookies, Trojan horses, and people peeking at your cache, get CyberMedia's Guard Dog Deluxe, a virtual canine designed to protect your PC from unwanted intruders.



Trespassers Beware: Keep snoops out of your Net experience with CyberMedia's $60 Guard Dog Deluxe.

Guard Dog has zero learning curve for new users: Simply install it, cruise through the quick interview process, and you're done. Guard Dog loads several protective options when you reboot. Cookie Blocker tracks cookies placed on your system by sites or third-party advertisers. A feature called My Info Filter prevents information you submit, like search queries, from going astray. Clean Up clears your URL history and cache, and Internet Access Monitor warns you if any program tries to use your TCP/IP connection (keeping an eye out for Trojan horses). You can also scan your hard drive at startup or on demand using a built-in Trend Micro virus protection program.

You can train Guard Dog to protect your system in the background. Set its default to warn you whenever something sneaky happens, and you'll find its warning bark an eye-opener. Guard Dog doesn't protect against every security misstep, but it does takes a healthy bite out of privacy pirates. **BONNY L. GEORGIA**

FILEBOX

CyberMedia Guard Dog Deluxe

★★★★

Verdict: Guard Dog shows who's out to get you—and keeps them away.

Pros: A no-brainer interface.

Cons: Requires CyberMedia Oil Change for updates.

$60 est. street price
CyberMedia
(800) 721-7824, (310) 664-5000
Enter 911 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Dial 'I' for Internet

Next to today's screaming-fast PCs, laser printers, and speedy modems, the old one-trick telephone seems positively antique. EnterCidco's $479 iPhone, which merges the power of the Net with the convenience of a telephone.

The iPhone boasts a 7.4-inch monochrome touch screen, a tiny keyboard, and a built-in 14.4Kbps modem for rudimentary Web and e-mail access—all married to an office-quality telephone. It automatically dials a toll-free ISP-locator service, finds a local dial-in number, and quickly connects to the Net.

Browsing the Web with the 16-shade grayscale touch screen is like browsing the newspaper—crisp, clear, and informative, but nothing exciting. And while the built-in browser delivers text plus GIF and JPEG images, it can handle only HTML 3.2, so there's no support for Java, frames, SSL security, or printing. However, Cidco plans to include these and other features in the future.

Hello? Cidco's $479 iPhone lets you send and receive e-mail and browse the Web through a 7.4-inch screen.

Telephone features that we normally take for granted—speed-dial buttons, Caller ID, speakerphone, and call log—are improved with the screen.

The iPhone isn't so much for high-tech gearheads as it is for non-PC folks who want the Net at home. It's not quite ready yet, but a few more features will make iPhone a great way to get the Web at your fingertips. **RICH SCHWERIN**

FILEBOX

iPhone

★★★

Verdict: Interesting, but costly considering all the features you give up.

Pros: Quick, automated setup.

Cons: Limited ISP support; tiny, chiclet keyboard; no printing; monochrome display is dull; rudimentary browser; 14.4Kbps modem.

$479 est. street price
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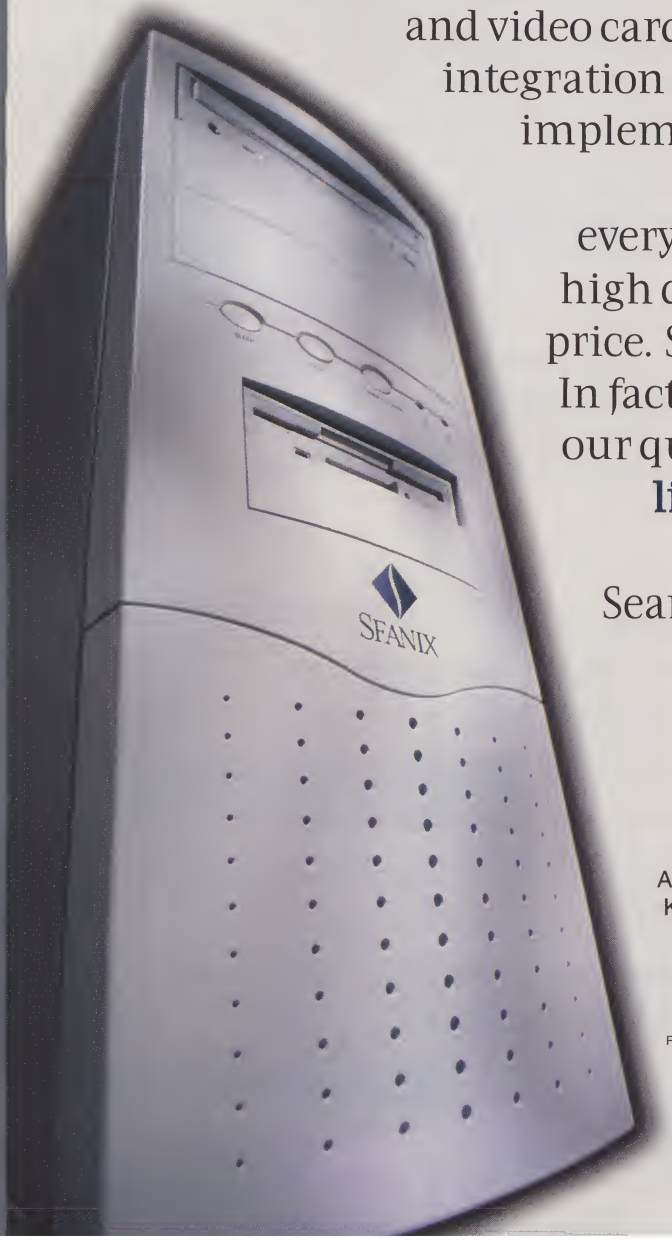

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Lazy Days

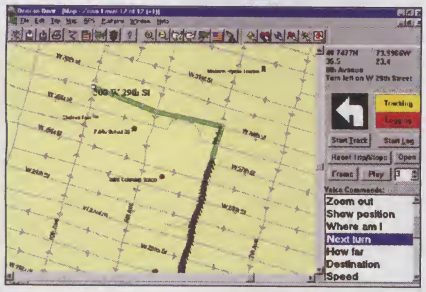
BY RON WHITE

I'm fully entrenched in middle age, and yet I get a schoolboy's thrill every time June comes around. Some part of me still expects three months with neither work nor responsibility nor shoes and socks; a time free from cares; a time when purposeless, mindless activities just seem natural. More than natural . . . they're expected. You'd be a fool not to tell the boss, "See ya in September," and head out on a grand adventure. Of course, it ain't gonna happen again in my lifetime. So, like the pathetic geek that I am, I turn to CD-ROMs to fantasize about all the things I'd do if I could step back in time to when three months of summer fun was a given.

DOOR-TO-DOOR COPILOT GPS ●●●●●

The most ecstatic and irrational of summer pleasures is hitting the road for adventures in uncharted territory. This inevitably involves getting lost and the male member of the family claiming his God-given right not to ask for directions. Now he doesn't have to with TravRoute Software's Door-to-Door CoPilot GPS, the niftiest thing to happen to computing since color laptops. It's not the only CD that creates detailed maps and directions, or that uses a global positioning system sensor to show your real-time location on an onscreen map. But CoPilot is the only one that keeps you company on the trip—the software speaks the directions to you as they come up. And you can talk to it, using voice-activated commands to zoom in on the map, ask how much farther, or find out the next turn. If you stray from the map's path, CoPilot recalculates the map and directions on the fly to get you back on track, and doesn't remind you about the time you got lost in Nevada. Finally, if you say, "Thank you," it says, "You're welcome." And it says, "You're welcome" if you say something else ending in *you*. That's the kind of subservience I like from my electronic gadgets.

Door-to-Door CoPilot GPS / TravRoute Software / (888) 872-8768, (609) 252-8197 / $300 est. street price / *Enter 831 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*



Traveling Companion: TravRoute's Door-to-Door CoPilot GPS is more than a help—it's a buddy.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID PERRY

THE INTERSTATE '76 ARSENAL ●●●●●

While you're driving along with your CoPilot, remember: There are two kinds of drivers—defensive drivers and jerks who pretend they're driving James Bond's car and the hood ornament is a gun sight. Imagine my amazement when, as one of the latter, I found that my daydreams became flesh—or as fleshy as 3-D graphics, stereo, force feedback, and animated explosions can make them. Activision's The Interstate '76 Arsenal is the only CD game set outside Lubbock, Texas, on winding roads brimming with victims. Take the low road and the game cleverly leads you through training sessions. Or just dive right in for a quick adrenaline rush. If you don't want to play fair, change the settings so you have a never-ending supply of bullets, rockets, and oil slicks, and choose from the add-on set of vehicles to create your personal highway nightmare. *Blam!* I could do this all summer.

The Interstate '76 Arsenal / Activision / (800) 477-3650, (310) 255-2000 / $45 est. street price / *Enter 832 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

THE WHITE HOUSE IS OUR HOUSE ●●●

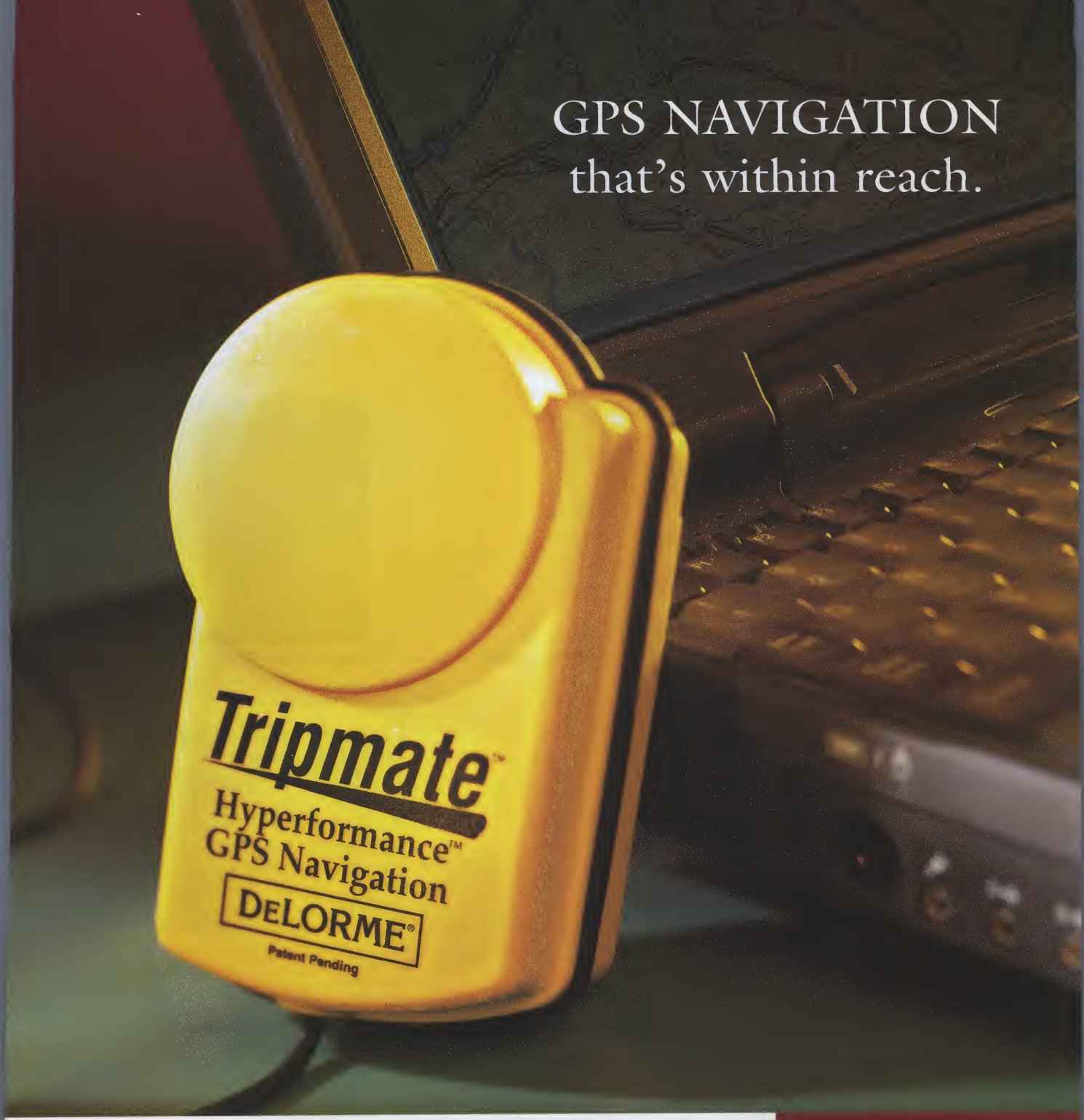
Oh, sorry. Socially unacceptable–morally reprehensible Ron took control there for a second. Instead of praising mindless violence, let me tell you about an inspiring way to spend this Independence Day—in a virtual White House. Autodesk's The White House Is Our House promises "access to parts of the house and grounds not included in public tours." But you know how White House promises are. You don't get access to *that* room off the Oval Office. What you do get are 360-degree panoramas that you can navigate easily. There are also guided tours about various topics presidential, videos, and boring stuff like that.

The White House Is Our House / Autodesk / (800) 874-2383 / $50 est. street price / *Enter 833 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

SKYTRIP AMERICA ●●●

If you have children, of course, The White House may be a bit suggestive for impressionable minds. Perhaps you'd be better off with something like

Ratings: ●●●●● *Fourth of July fireworks.* ●●●● *Skinny-dipping.* ●●● *Sleeping in.* ●● *Labor Day blues.* ● *Summer school.*



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Infolink 147 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Discovery Channel Multimedia's SkyTrip America, which feeds American history and geography in easily digestible narrations, videos, photos, and text. The gimmick that's supposed to trick kids into listening to history lectures is a panorama—360 degrees, natch—covering a half-dozen states strewn with historic figures in random poses. Now, is there a kid alive who's going to fall for this? No. This is an educational CD stuck in the rut of classroom media—lectures, slide shows, and videos. It doesn't take best advantage of a computer's strengths. Multimedia here is used as sugarcoating, not to create new brain cells.

SkyTrip America / Discovery Channel Multimedia / (800) 889-9950, (301) 986-1999 / $35 est. street price / *Enter 834 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Dig It: Strap on your guided missiles; it's time to fight dirty with MicroProse Worms2.

WORMS2 ●●●●●

This—*this!*—is an example of what an educational CD should be. But I hate to label it *educational* because the term's a jinx. MicroProse's Worms2 is a more colorful, noisier sequel to Worms, one of the first CDs to be really imaginative in combining games with computers. You command a platoon of worms, each of which can use dozens of weapons, from guided missiles to earth drills. Your worms battle with another platoon of worms, controlled by either a PC or your youngest child. The combinations of weapons, tactics, and positions on the terrain—generated from scratch for each game—make this an endlessly inventive and challenging game. I'm betting anyone learns more about physics, strategy, ballistics—and even fate—from this game than anyone ever learns of history from SkyTrip America.

Worms2 / MicroProse / (800) 695-4263, (619) 693-1200 / $40 est. street price / *Enter 835 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

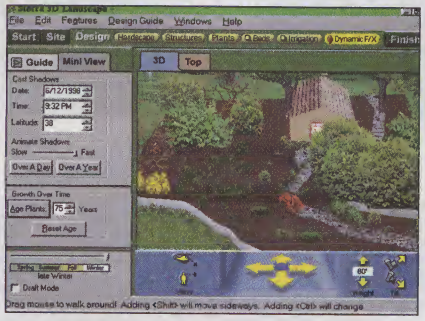
DINOMIGHT BASEBALL ●●

What most people think of when it comes to summer is, of course, dinosaurs playing baseball. I know it seemed natural to me when I came across Microforum's DinoMight Baseball. Goes to show how wrong I can be. I'm as big a dinosaur fan as the next kid, but watching T-Rex in a baseball uniform swinging at a ball soon loses its fascination. The game is too simple. Pitching is a matter of selecting a throw from a menu, and batting is simply hitting the Enter key at the right time. This may work for children who need the simplicity—or for simple adults. Best take: If you have little kids who are driving you crazy around the house this summer, DinoMight Baseball is at least a cheaper diversion than summer camp.

DinoMight Baseball / Microforum / (800) 465-2323, (416) 656-9594 / $30 est. street price / *Enter 836 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

COMPLETE LANDDESIGNER ●●●●

As for me this summer, I'm not venturing any farther into the wilds than my own backyard. This is going to be the year I *really* get back to the earth, digging my hands deep into the rich, black soil, nurturing new plants to life. Or, I'll just spend a lot of time with Sierra Home's Complete LandDesigner playing at what I would be doing if it weren't so damn hot outside. The Sierra bundle of four programs—3D Landscape 3.0, Photo LandDesigner, Garden Encyclopedia, and 3D Deck—is the closest you can get to the earth and keep your fingernails clean. The two 3-D titles let you view your future backyard creations from every angle, including that of the neighborhood helicopter. Age your plantings to see how they'll look when you retire, or spin the seasons to see how your tree looks with a fall blush. Photo LandDesigner lets you add a landscaping scenario to a photo of your house. And Garden Encyclopedia is the best guide you can get to selecting the plants that'll make it past next Christmas.



Plant Parenthood: Design your own garden onscreen or in the yard with Complete LandDesigner.

Complete LandDesigner / Sierra Home / (800) 757-7707, (425) 649-9800 / $50 est. street price / *Enter 837 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Rough Play: Get down to some good old robot-to-robot combat with Cavedog's Total Annihilation.

TOTAL ANNIHILATION ●●●●●

Hi. It's the socially unacceptable–morally reprehensible Ron again. The other Ron—the wimp—won't admit it, but he's going to spend the summer lost in Cavedog Entertainment's Total Annihilation. This is one of the neater strategy games—combining the mechwarrior look with a minimum of housekeeping and a maximum of action. You command a band of intelligent fighting machines in a battle to the death against another robot gang. You fight a series of missions in a variety of wonderfully fantastic alien landscapes. The real heat, though, is in combat against other humans over the Internet or via a network. When you exhaust the original game and your violent side cries out for more, get Total Annihilation: The Core Contingency, which adds 225 warriors, 75 missions, and a dozen new 3-D worlds. Both Rons are going to be tied up with it until Labor Day. Just say I'm not in.

Total Annihilation / $50; $28 for Total Annihilation: The Core Contingency, est. street prices / Cavedog Entertainment / (888) 477-9369, (425) 867-2597 / *Enter 838 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

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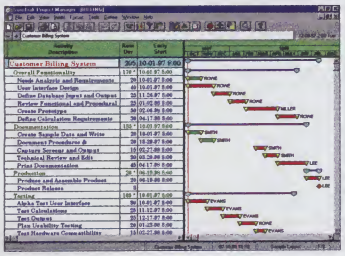

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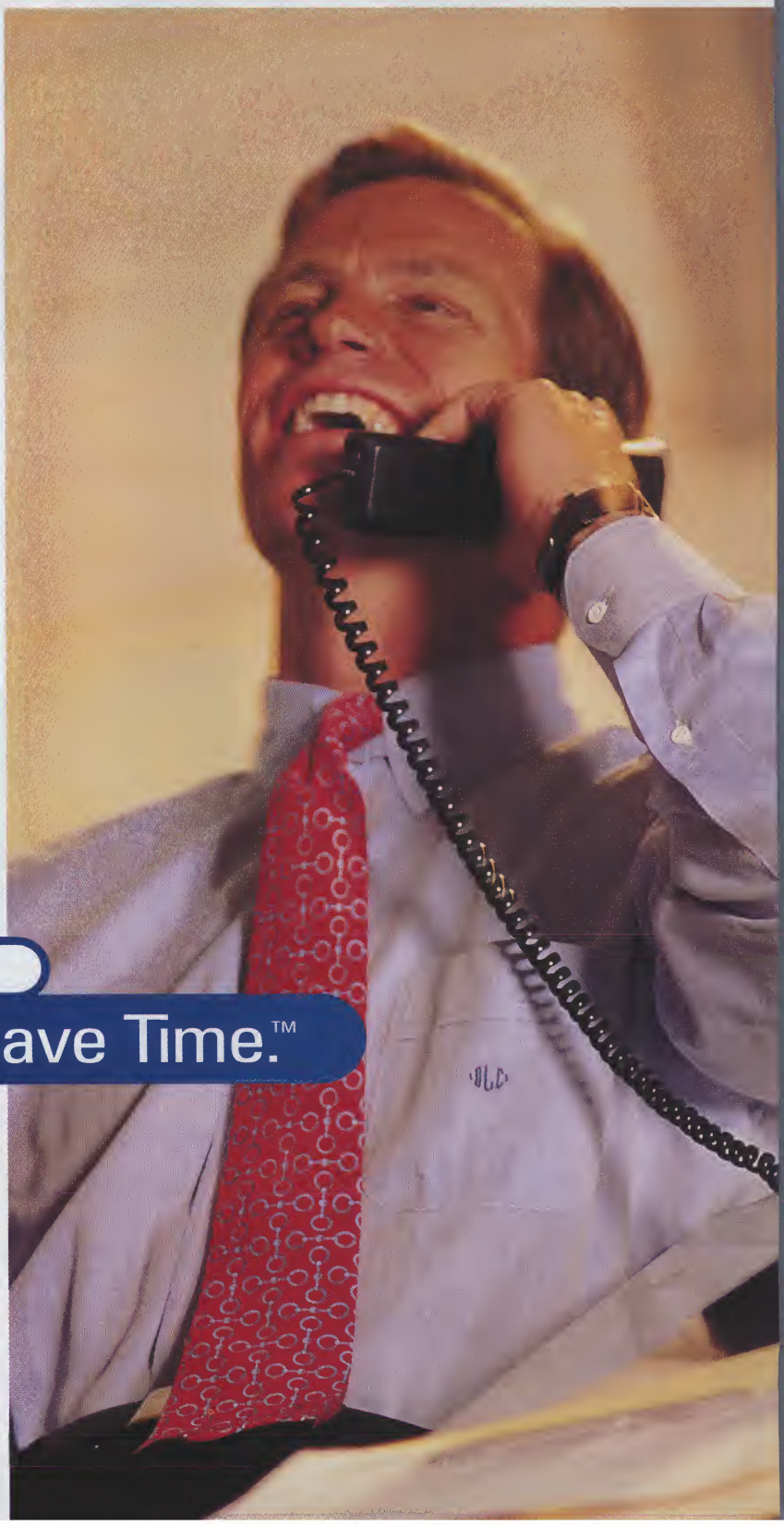

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- Altec Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
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- **U.S. Robotics x2 56Kbps* Winmodem**
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- Microsoft Windows 95
- Microsoft Home Essentials 98
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Upgrades:

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- Integrated ATI Rage Pro Turbo AGP, 4MB SGRAM Graphics
- Altec Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- 3-D Stereo Surround Sound with 32 Voice Wavetable Audio
- **U.S. Robotics x2 56Kbps* Winmodem**
- NEC C550™ 15" Monitor (14" viewable, .27dp)
- Microsoft Windows 95
- Microsoft Home Essentials 98
- Microsoft IntelliMouse, NEC Palmrest Keyboard, and Microphone
- 3-Year UltraCare Limited Warranty with 1-Year On-Site Service

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A-List Top 200 Steals & Deals

The best or the bargain—which one should you buy? Find out in this exclusive guide to editors' top picks in every hardware, software, and Internet category.

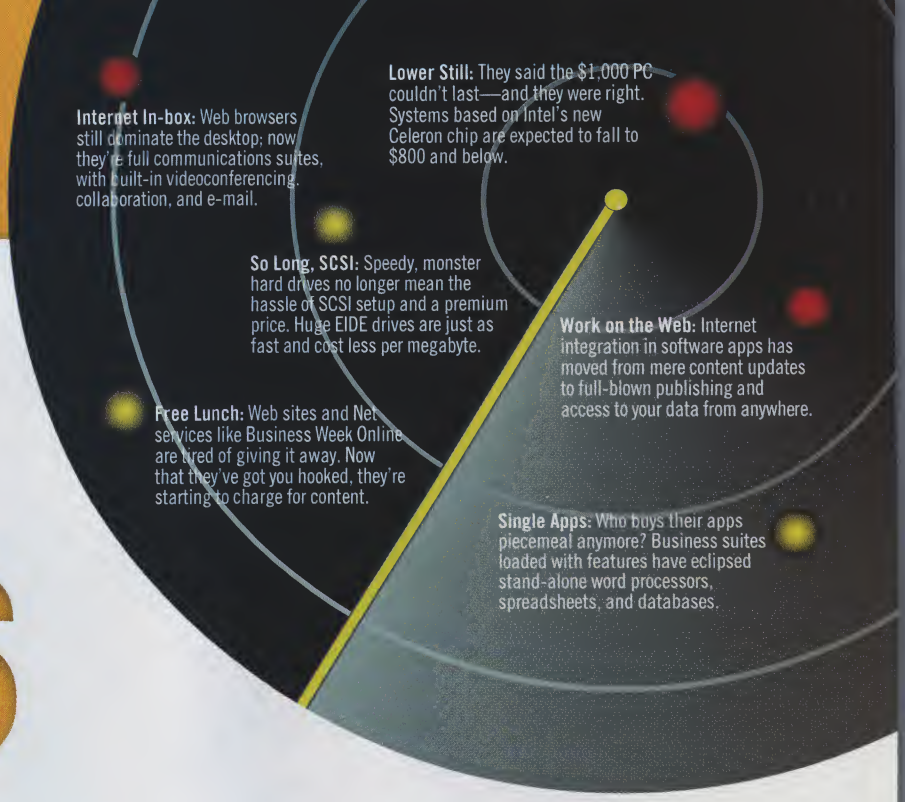
Spare me the technical hoo-ha. Just tell me which product to buy. How many of us have had the urge—if not the gall—to bark those words when seeking advice about a purchase? But think of the poor sales guy or trusted colleague, muffin-faced, trying to come up with an intelligent reply. Obviously, the question is never so simple.

Buy Smart Some PC products pay for themselves when they help you cinch a single sale and win over the ogres in upper management. Budgets don't matter. You need state-of-the-art gear, period; spend what it takes. In the pages that follow, you'll find a veritable showcase of such top-drawer technology in our exclusive A-List.

But most of us have budget dragons breathing down our necks. When cost matters most, what must you forgo? Check out the next several pages, and you'll be pleasantly surprised. Lose a few fancy features, drop the price by as much as two-thirds, and *voilà*—you'll find bargain alternatives worth considering in our Budget Pick lists.

The best products are good values and hassle-free over the long run. A speedy network printer is an impressive beast, for example, but what about consumables like ink and paper—which ultimately eat more money than the printer itself? Does the printer come with management software, and is there actually savings in total cost of ownership? You also want a printer that can identify where paper has jammed, and whose print quality holds up on acetates or heavy bonds.

At *PC Computing*, usability is the test track for both the best and the cheapest. All the products on the pages that follow—and the scads that didn't make this list—underwent exhaustive usability testing in our labs before



als

they came under the scrutiny of editors' eyes. The contenders were carefully compared against each other, and against alternative technologies. Debates raged, prices were considered, consensus emerged. Editors became friends again.

Win Some, Lose Some Not every product category is mentioned here, mostly because some technologies simply aren't up to snuff (care to trust important phone numbers to handwriting recognition software?). But for our 100 A-List categories, you'll find the very best products available in price and capability—just as you do every month in our A-List.

You'll find plenty of surprises too. In many cases, the best product is also the best value. And the most feature-laden products in a category don't necessarily make the cut in either the A-List or the Budget Pick lists. That's because integration, elegance of design, and ease of use are far more important than a long checklist of features most people never use.

RADAR: Picks & Pans

You'd have to be superhuman to keep up. With so many new products and technologies, it's tough to stay on top of it all. Focus on the important stuff: the hits or misses that determine whether the products you buy do more, cost less—or both.

● Closing In ● On Its Way Out

HARDWARE	119	SOFTWARE	151	INTERNET	171
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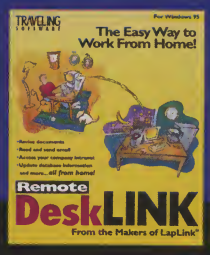

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WINDOWS® 98 READY

A-List: Hardware

Are you really going to trust hardware decisions to the same meatballs who saddled you with a slow-boat Pentium two years ago? You'll regret it—not just when your apps are gunning your hardware to the limit, but every morning you face yesterday's technology.

Even when you have a say in purchase decisions, there stand the budget browbeaters, ready to humble you like a nabbed pickpocket before a town-hall judge. Actually, top-of-the-line performance is cheaper than you think. You won't find a faster, better-equipped Pentium II corporate box than Gateway 2000's G6-333. Yet the system's $2,933 price leaves enough money even in tight budgets for NEC's superb SuperScript 860 laser printer.

On the other hand, if you're stuck with a $1,000 ceiling, consider CompUSA's PC American A233. It offers a 233MHz MMX Pentium processor, a 4.3GB hard drive, a 32-speed CD-ROM drive, and a 56Kbps fax modem, all for $1,000. Can you say *bargain*? If you can shake a little more change out of your company's purchasing skinflints, Dell's Dimension XPS D233 is a certifiable screamer: 233MHz MMX Pentium, 4MB graphics card, and plenty of extras.

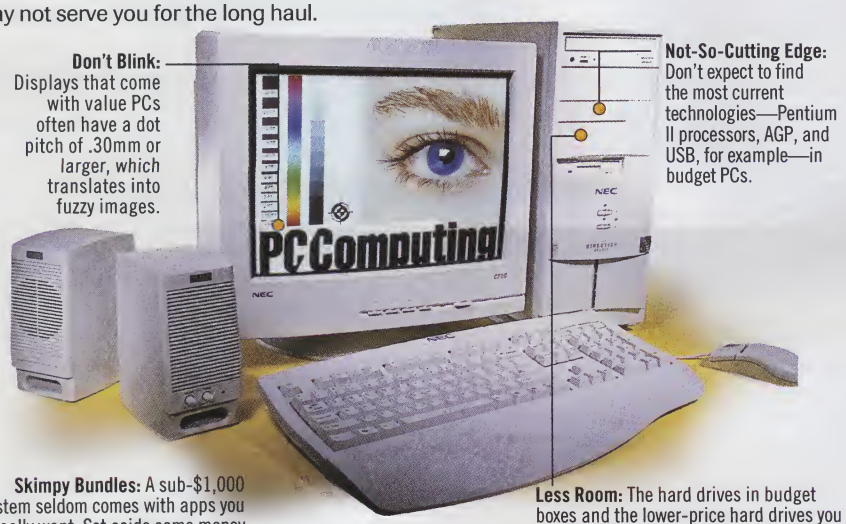
The same price/performance spread holds for portable systems too. The ne plus ultra of notebooks is IBM's ThinkPad 770ED: 266MHz Pentium II, stunning 14.1-inch screen—even a DVD drive. Its $5,799 price tag, however, is not for the weak of wallet. For half that price you can get NEC's Versa 6060, which offers as much versatility as the ThinkPad, if not quite as much raw power. It's an excellent excuse to get rid of the beige box on your desktop in favor of using a single portable PC.

As for output, NEC's SuperScript 860 printer produces 600 dpi. At $399 it's a steal. But so is Epson America's Stylus Color 800—which at $299 costs less yet gives you color. It's dazzling and speedy color at that: 1,440-by-720 resolution at 8 ppm. Incidentally, if everyone on the network needs color output, look no further than Lexmark's Optra SC 1275n, which costs less than $4,000 and renders 600-dpi resolutions.

The finest technology often costs less than pip-squeak competing products. So if you've got a little moola left over in your budget, nothing gooses system throughput more than a speedy video card. And none is faster than Number Nine's Revolution 3D—which carries a modest $219 price tag (with a whopping 8MB of memory). And as a gift to yourself, consider Sony's 17-inch GDM-200PS, which is pricey at $800 but worth it.

WHAT YOU GIVE UP

Is that bargain PC really such a great deal? You may save hundreds of dollars but the outdated technology may not serve you for the long haul.



Don't Blink: Displays that come with value PCs often have a dot pitch of .30mm or larger, which translates into fuzzy images.

Not-So-Cutting Edge: Don't expect to find the most current technologies—Pentium II processors, AGP, and USB, for example—in budget PCs.

Skimpy Bundles: A sub-$1,000 system seldom comes with apps you really want. Set aside some money for the software your business really needs, like Office 97.

Less Room: The hard drives in budget boxes and the lower-price hard drives you buy separately won't be as roomy as the latest and greatest. Instead of a 6GB or 9GB drive, a 4GB model is the norm.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERNIE FRIEDLANDER

Desktop Systems

You can't lose: Skyrocketing clock speeds and plummeting prices are the big news in PCs. And while AMD, Cyrix, and Intel bring new chips to market, rock-bottom memory prices and new hard-drive technology mean more power for your dollar—no matter what your budget.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **One Step Removed** The newest processors—350MHz and 400MHz Pentium II CPUs—are harshest on your budget. Step down to 300MHz or 333MHz for the best value.
- **Sales-Tax Shuffle** Don't assume that just because you buy from an out-of-state company you'll save on sales tax. If the vendor has a location in your state—or just a corporate policy like Micron's—you'll still pay.
- **Start a Price War** Play two vendors off one another. Get a written price quote from one, then watch the other match or beat it.

	A-List*	Budget Pick*
State-of-the-Art PC	**Dell Dimension XPS R400** **We've seen the future of PCs—and it's the blazing Dimension XPS R400. With a 400MHz Pentium II CPU, an STB nVidia Plus AGP video card, a 14.4GB hard drive, and a DVD drive behind it, Windows simply doesn't get any faster.** $3,399. (800) 879-3355; InfoLink No. 621	**Hewlett-Packard Vectra VL Series 8** For NT, it's the fastest machine around. But in exchange for a hefty savings you give up 8MB of video RAM, a DVD drive, and an Iomega Zip drive. $2,750. (800) 752-0900 **Verdict:** It's simple: For Windows 95, invest in the Dimension XPS R400; for NT, take the savings and get the Vectra VL.
High-Performance PC	**Gateway 2000 G6-333** **Nothing's perfect, so there must be something lacking in the blazing G6-333. But we were hard-pressed to find it. The 333MHz Pentium II system is loaded with 64MB of RAM, a 4MB STB Velocity AGP graphics board, and IBM's 14GB hard drive.** $2,933. (800) 846-2000; InfoLink No. 622	**NEC Computer Systems Division Direction 333L** Skip the extras in favor of a screamer that you can add to later. The Direction lacks the G6-333's monster hard drive, DVD player, and Zip drive. $2,067 direct. (888) 863-2669; InfoLink No. 623 **Verdict:** If you don't need frills, go with the solid foundation of the Direction 333L.
Desktop Workhorse	**NEC Computer Systems Division Direction 300L** **NEC also knows how to trick out a system. This 300MHz Pentium II PC sports an 8MB AGP graphics card, an Iomega Zip drive, and a 32-speed CD-ROM drive. Plus you've got plenty of room to grow.** $2,386 direct. (888) 863-2669; InfoLink No. 624	**Dell Dimension XPS D233** Yesterday's top-of-the-line 233MHz MMX Pentium is today's bargain box for running Windows 95. $1,899. (800) 388-8542; InfoLink No. 625 **Verdict:** For basic productivity work, the well-stocked Dimension XPS D233 is all you need. But for more demanding apps get the Direction 300L.
Low-Cost Desktop PC	**CompUSA PC American A233** **That's no typo. For under a grand you can bag a 233MHz Pentium with MMX. It's well appointed too: You'll find a 4MB 3-D graphics card, a 4.3GB hard drive, a 32-speed CD-ROM drive, and a 56Kbps fax modem. Wow.** $999. (888) 226-6772; InfoLink No. 627	**PC Importers Extreme G-200** Pocket a hundred bucks but sacrifice power and features. The Extreme G-200 has only a 200MHz Pentium with a smallish 2.1GB hard drive. $899. (800) 759-4695; InfoLink No. 628 **Verdict:** The Extreme G-200 is fine for the tightest budgets, but you're better off paying just a little more for a better-stocked system.
SOHO System	**Compaq Presario 4860** **It's just as well equipped for your spreadsheets as it is for your kids' games. You get a 333MHz Pentium II, 64MB of RAM, DVD, and AGP graphics. Add the Presario FX500 multimedia monitor for a great picture and JBL sound.** $2,748. InfoLink No. 629	**IBM Aptiva S62** You won't be disappointed by its 266MHz Pentium II CPU, DVD drive, amazing 3-D sound, and AGP graphics. Best of all, it doesn't look like your boring office box. $2,499. (800) 426-7235; InfoLink No. 630 **Verdict:** For the most fully loaded home system, go with the Presario 4860.

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May 1996 20GLs

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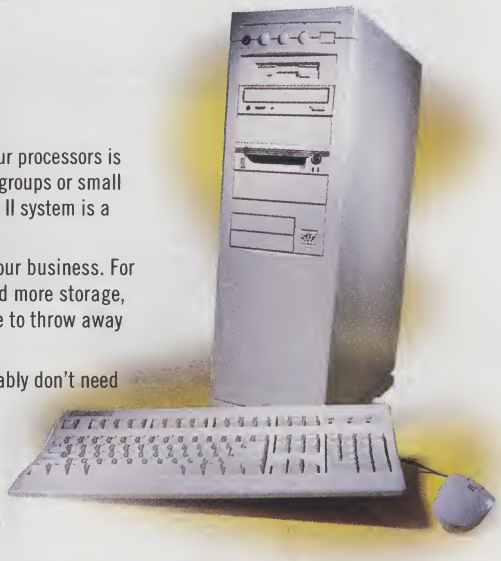
Pricewise Direct System	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	Tagram Thunderbolt **You know what you want, so skip the middleman and save plenty by buying direct. This 300MHz Pentium II system has AGP graphics, a removable LS-120 drive, and plenty of other extras. And talk about fast; your Windows apps will fly.** $1,999 direct. (800) 824-7267; InfoLink No. 631	**CyberMax Computer BusinessMax A2 266** You'll take a performance hit with this 266MHz AMD-K6 system. But the $400 savings will help you get over it—plus you still get AGP graphics. $1,599. (888) 437-4596; InfoLink No. 632 **Verdict:** The BusinessMax is a solid choice only for those on the tightest budgets. Otherwise trade up to the Thunderbolt.

Servers

Buying a server no longer means blowing your entire capital budget. Thanks to newer, more diverse CPUs and all-time-low prices for memory, storage, and video, you can equip your office with a high-powered server for about the price of a desktop PC.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Two Will Do** A Pentium Pro server that scales up to four processors is a fine investment—but it's not for everyone. For workgroups or small offices with fewer than 25 users, a dual-CPU Pentium II system is a better deal.
- **Room to Grow** Make sure the server can grow with your business. For starters look for at least four empty drive bays to add more storage, and plenty of empty memory banks so you don't have to throw away RAM when you upgrade.
- **Nix the Graphics** Check that server bundle: You probably don't need a monitor or high-end graphics card on a workhorse server. Load up on RAM instead and watch performance soar.



High-Performance Web Server	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	Compaq ProLiant 850R **Don't make your Web fans wait. This 200MHz Pentium Pro system serves up your Windows NT–based Web site at lightning-fast speeds. And when you're ready for more oomph, pop in another Pentium Pro processor (or three) and pump up the RAM to 512MB.** $4,821. InfoLink No. 633	**SAG STF Dual Pentium II 333MHz** The STF gives you a whopping 18GB hard drive, a 333MHz Pentium II CPU, and 64MB of SDRAM—all for about the price of a desktop system. $3,499. (800) 989-3475; InfoLink No. 634 **Verdict:** The STF's price is sweet, but its upgrade options are limited. The ProLiant is a better choice for the long term.
Small Workgroup Server		
	Micron Electronics NetFrame LV2000 **This superfast 233MHz Pentium II box teems with top-drawer components, including 256MB of RAM and six 4GB Ultra Wide SCSI-3 hard drives. The package wouldn't be complete without Microsoft NT Server and Intel LANDesk.** $7,299. (888) 634-8799; InfoLink No. 635	**Dell PowerEdge 2200** This 233MHz Pentium II entry-level server is adequately stocked and gives you plenty of room to grow. But first things first: Upgrade its RAM. $2,976. (800) 388-8542; InfoLink No. 636 **Verdict:** Buy the PowerEdge if you can't afford the excellent NetFrame. Just be prepared to spend some more money on upgrades down the line.
Large Workgroup Server		
	Compaq ProLiant 6000 **The biggest, baddest box around. Invest in a server loaded with four 200MHz Pentium Pro processors, 512MB of RAM, an 8.6GB hard drive, a trio of power supplies, and Windows NT 4.0. Best of all, it's easy to manage and grows with your company.** $20,745. InfoLink No. 637	**Digital Server 5200** Such a deal! This dual–266MHz Pentium II powerhouse rips through network traffic at warp speed for much less money than the ProLiant. $10,990. (800) 344-4825; InfoLink No. 638 **Verdict:** Growing networks with heavy traffic need the ProLiant's scalability, but most offices will be more than covered with the Server 5200.

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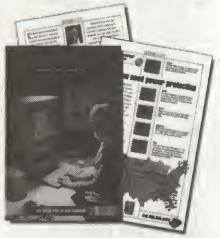

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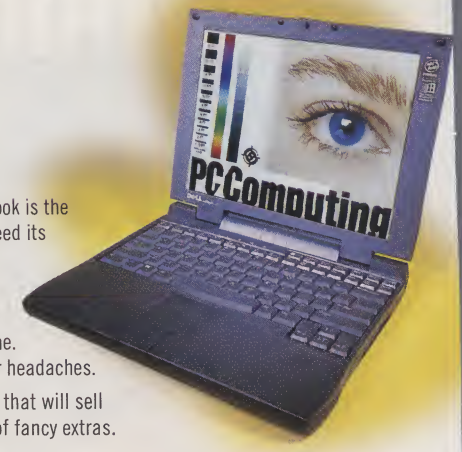
A-List: Hardware

Portable Systems

Today's traveling PCs nearly equal their desktop cousins. Even budget portables defy their name, and are loaded to the gills. Of course you still pay a premium for systems with Intel's new Deschutes Pentium II CPUs, but you can get models with slower processors for a relative bargain.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Skimp on the Screen** The most expensive part of a notebook is the display. Don't splurge on a 14.1-inch screen unless you need its top quality for presentations—or the system is your sole machine.
- **Share the Wealth** For big corporate purchases, go with a manufacturer that uses common components across its line. Interchangeable parts mean lower support costs and fewer headaches.
- **Build to Order** Find a company like Gateway 2000 or Dell that will sell you a custom notebook. Load it up with memory in favor of fancy extras.



	A-List*	Budget Pick*
State-of-the-Art Portable	**IBM ThinkPad 770ED** **A take-no-prisoners notebook, this 266MHz Pentium II system simply doesn't skimp. The 14.1-inch screen rivals your 17-inch desktop monitor, and the ThinkPad's surround-sound audio and DVD drive make for the ultimate multimedia experience.** $5,799. (800) 426-2255; InfoLink No. 639	**Hewlett-Packard OmniBook 7100** This 8.3-pound notebook features a 14.1-inch display and the same CPU as the ThinkPad. You give up bells and whistles like DVD and LS-120 floppy drives though. $5,275. (800) 243-9812 **Verdict:** Spend $500 more for the ThinkPad's extras and usability.
Desktop Replacement	**IBM ThinkPad 600** **If you can have only one PC, make it the ThinkPad 600. It's not the fastest 266MHz portable, but the sub–6-pound ThinkPad suffers no peer in usability. And the machine's 13.3-inch screen makes a stunning presentation platform.** $4,799. (800) 426-2255; InfoLink No. 641	**NEC Computer Systems Division Versa 6060** Clear that clunker off your desk. The Versa is a worthy replacement thanks to its 166MHz Pentium processor and 32MB of RAM. $2,899. (888) 863-2699; InfoLink No. 642 **Verdict:** It's nearly half as much—in both price and processor speed—as the ThinkPad. But for a solid budget system, the Versa 6060 serves you well.
Traveling Multimedia Portable	**Dell Computer Latitude CP M233ST** **Dell wrote the book on durability. The tough-as-nails Latitude has survived our brutal torture tests four years running. Just as important, its performance screams. Thankfully, it's as easy on your wallet as it is on your shoulders.** $2,899. (800) 388-8542; InfoLink No. 643	**Gateway 2000 Solo 2300LS** Pay a little bit less and get a little bit more. The Solo also aced our torture tests and it provides an unbelievable 5-plus hours of battery life. On the downside, it also brings more heft. $2,749. (800) 846-2000; InfoLink No. 644 **Verdict:** The Latitude is better for schlepping around, but if battery life matters most get the Solo.
Lightweight Traveling Companion	**IBM ThinkPad 560X** **Just because you're on the road, you don't have to give up power. The ThinkPad 560X is just right, with its 233MHz MMX Pentium processor, 32MB of RAM, and 4GB hard drive. It's hard to believe you also get a gorgeous 12.1-inch screen and a full-size keyboard.** $3,099. (800) 426-2255; InfoLink No. 645	**Toshiba Libretto 50CT** Only slightly heavier than a palm-size PC, and it runs a full-blown version of Windows. If you need just e-mail and a few apps when on the road, this is your dream portable. $1,299. (800) 334-3445; InfoLink No. 646 **Verdict:** For real work you'll want the ThinkPad 560X's full-size keyboard.
Handheld Portable	**3Com Palm III** **It's not hard to figure out why the Palm III is the best-selling handheld PC. It's tiny and easy to use. Better yet, it seamlessly integrates with your desktop so you're always in sync. And now there are plenty of apps to run on it.** $399 list price. (800) 881-7256; InfoLink No. 647	**Franklin Electronic Publishers Rex PC Companion** The 1.4-ounce Rex manages contacts, notes, and appointments. No keyboard, no stylus, no sweat! $150. (888) 739-6400; InfoLink No. 648 **Verdict:** If you need to enter information when you're on the go, the Palm III makes it a snap. But the Rex is the only PDA you can tuck in your wallet.

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Printers

It's so easy to look good—thanks to a growing crop of unbelievably affordable printers. In fact, high-end color laser printers are down about a third from last year's prices, and slick color ink-jet printers cost less than $300.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Ink Out Costs** If you're planning to print primarily monochrome documents, don't go with an ink jet. Its high cost per page—at least twice that of a laser—adds up in the long run.
- **Make It Multifunction** Maybe you need more than just a printer. For a new home office go with an all-in-one device that's a printer, a copier, a scanner, and a fax machine in one.
- **One for All** A three-person office or department doesn't need three individual printers. Consider a networked printer instead.

	A-List*	Budget Pick*
Low-Cost Desktop Laser Printer	**NEC Technologies SuperScript 860** **No one likes to wait: And now you don't have to with the SuperScript's 8-ppm engine. You'll love its impressive-looking 600-dpi output. It's easy to set up and use too. And don't overlook the amazing $399 price tag.** $399. (800) 632-4636; InfoLink No. 649	**NEC Technologies SuperScript 860** You won't find another printer with such a fast engine speed at such a low price. You can spend the same for a Hewlett-Packard LaserJet, but you'll get only a 6-ppm engine. $399. (800) 632-4636; InfoLink No. 649 **Verdict:** The fastest and least expensive laser printer you can put on your desk. Period.
High-Speed Desktop Laser Printer	**NEC Technologies SuperScript 1260** **NEC's high-speed SuperScript 1260 lives up to its name with a ripping-fast 12-ppm engine—that's near-network printing speeds from a desktop model. That said, go ahead and hook it up to your LAN for others to share.** $699. (800) 632-4636; InfoLink No. 650	**NEC Technologies SuperScript 1260** Your budget manager simply won't approve any other high-speed printer. The SuperScript 1260's excellent speed and price can't be matched. $699. (800) 632-4636; InfoLink No. 650 **Verdict:** Desktop laser printers shouldn't print this fast or cost this little—but the SuperScript 1260 does both.
High-Speed Network Laser Printer	**Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 5Si MX** **HP's standard-bearer keeps standing up to the newer players. It's fast and easy to use, serving up pages pronto with its blazing 24-ppm engine and 600-dpi output. Paper handling is outstanding, and its cost per page is a mere penny.** $3,049. (800) 527-3753	**Lexmark Optra S 2420n** Great-looking and lightning-fast output has never cost so little. With a 24-ppm engine and 1,200-dpi output, the Optra S does any network proud. $1,879. (800) 539-6275; InfoLink No. 651 **Verdict:** Spend about $1,000 less *and all you give* up is advanced paper handling. The Lexmark Optra S is a smart choice for most offices.
Multifunction Printer/Fax/Copier	**Canon MultiPass L6000** **Set up your office in an instant with the Canon MultiPass L6000. You get a printer, a copier, a fax machine, and a scanner for less than $600. And that's not all: You also get Xerox TextBridge Classic OCR and plenty of other business applications.** $599. (800) 652-2666; InfoLink No. 652	**Hewlett-Packard OfficeJet 610** A printer, a copier, and a fax machine in one isn't enough; you want color. The OfficeJet delivers with its stunning ink-jet output. No scanner, though. $499. (800) 752-0900 **Verdict:** For color documents, the clear choice is the OfficeJet. Otherwise, go with the crisp, affordable laser output of the MultiPass.
Desktop Color Printer	**Epson America Stylus Color 800** **There's not much the Stylus Color 800 can't do: It prints stellar-looking 1,440-by-720-dpi color graphics and photos, plus it produces razor-sharp text. Not bad for less than $300. At this price you can afford to buy a pair for the office.** $299. (800) 463-7766	**Epson America Stylus Color 800** Color printing used to be a luxury. But now, thanks to the Stylus 800, everyone from the mail-room clerk to the CEO can afford it. For $299 you simply can't find a better deal. $299. (800) 463-7766 **Verdict:** Get your documents noticed with the Stylus Color 800.

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A-List: Hardware

	A-List*	Budget Pick*
Low-Cost Network Color Printer	**Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 1600CM** **The cheapest—and only—way to add an ink-jet color printer to your office network. In fact, no other printer competes in this class. The DeskJet 1600CM serves up great-looking 600-dpi output at speeds up to 9 ppm.** $1,999. (800) 752-0900	**Hewlett-Packard JetDirect 150X External Print Server** Maybe you don't need a network printer after all. With this external print server you can turn any color printer into a network resource. $150. (800) 533-1333 **Verdict:** If you already have one or more color printers, just network them with the JetDirect.
High-Speed Network Color Printer	**Lexmark Optra SC 1275n** **The Optra SC 1275n serves up professional-quality color laser output at blazing-fast print speeds. You also get a great array of paper-handling options. With the Optra SC, everyone in the office can look like a winner.** $3,499. (800) 539-6275; InfoLink No. 653	**Minolta Color PageWorks PS** It prints a little slower than the Optra SC but it still keeps you looking sharp. You'll spend an extra $379 for an Ethernet adapter though. $3,299. (888) 264-6658; InfoLink No. 654 **Verdict:** The Optra is the color workhorse every office needs, but you can trade some speed for a couple hundred bucks with the PageWorks PS.
Personal Photo Printer	**Sony DPP-M55** **Forget FotoMat; print out your photos on the Sony DPP-M55. You'll pay less than a dollar per page for great-looking dye-sublimation output. Got a Sony digital camera? Skip the cables and beam your photos directly to the printer via infrared.** $499. (800) 326-9551; InfoLink No. 655	**Panasonic TruPhoto** For the best-looking no-muss, no-fuss photos, the TruPhoto is the ticket. Skip the inks and dyes, just insert your paper and go. Spend just 75 cents per page for your photos. $299. (888) 763-4433; InfoLink No. 656 **Verdict:** Buy the Sony if you have a Sony camera; otherwise save with the TruPhoto.

Storage

Save it. These days there's no reason to fear maxing out on disk space. With Goliath hard drives going for just pennies per megabyte and a new crop of removable drives, anyone can afford industrial-strength storage.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Long Run** Don't be fooled by a hard drive's or removable drive's price tag. Compute the cost per megabyte—divide the price by its storage capacity—to figure out its real value.
- **Open Wide** Save money on removable drives by going with internal versions. Cracking the case saves you from $50 to $100.
- **Numbers Game** When it comes to CD-ROM drives, don't be swayed by drive speed. A 32X drive, for example, isn't necessarily better than a 24X drive, as most software isn't optimized for anything over 10X.

	A-List*	Budget Pick*
Hard Drive	**Quantum Bigfoot TX** **You can't even buy a gumball with it these days, but a measly 3 cents gets you a megabyte of storage on this blazing-fast drive. And there's lots more where that came from: The Bigfoot TX is a whopping 12GB—plenty of room for all your digital photos.** $399. (800) 624-5545; InfoLink No. 657	**Seagate Medalist Pro 6530** Shave $100 off the Bigfoot's price and go with this respectable 6.5GB drive—you'll find it in many new PCs. $299. (800) 732-4283; InfoLink No. 658 **Verdict:** Pay a little more up front for the best buy, the Quantum Bigfoot TX, which gives you more storage for less money.
Removable Storage	**Iomega Jaz 2GB** **Skip the floppies on steroids. The second-generation Jaz holds twice as much data—almost 2GB—as its predecessor, and it's faster to boot. Thankfully it also reads original Jaz cartridges, so you've got nothing to lose.** $549 for internal drive, $649 for external drive. (888) 884-6634; InfoLink No. 659	**SyQuest SyJet** Sure, you like wide, open spaces—but you'd prefer to keep your wallet closed. For about half the price of the Jaz go with the SyJet's 1.5GB cartridges. $299. (800) 245-2278; InfoLink No. 660 **Verdict:** For swapping old and new files the Jaz 2GB is a better bet; but if you're going it alone, save big with the SyJet.

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	A-List*	Budget Pick*
CD-ROM Drive	**Panasonic 12X Big 5** **Trust us: It's plenty speedy. You don't need the fastest-rated CD-ROM drive to get the most out of today's business apps. Instead, get the Big 5. Wouldn't you rather queue up your favorite discs five at a time and put an end to all that CD swapping?** $279. (800) 742-8086; InfoLink No. 661	**Toshiba XM-6202B** Purists look no further: This 32-speed drive is fast and affordable. You don't need much more than the Toshiba XM-6202B. $129. (714) 457-0777; InfoLink No. 662 **Verdict:** Take the cash and go with the Toshiba, unless you long for the convenience of the Big 5's CD changer.
CD-Recordable Drive	**Ricoh MediaMaster** **Record your own audio discs, archive old files, or simply play your favorite CD-ROM games. The MediaMaster does it all—again and again thanks to its CD-RW technology, which lets you rewrite to a disc up to 1,000 times.** $699 list price for internal SCSI drive, $25 per disc. (800) 225-1899; InfoLink No. 663	**Smart and Friendly CD-R 2006 Plus** Once is enough for you. Get a basic CD-R drive and pocket $350. The CD-R 2006 Plus is painless to set up and fast too. $349. (800) 959-7001; InfoLink No. 664 **Verdict:** Go with CD-RW's flexibility and get the MediaMaster, or else wait for a DVD-RAM drive that does even more.
Network Storage	**Seagate Technology Barracuda 18** **It's the mother of all SCSI drives, and the fastest too, thanks to a variety of controller options including Ultra Wide SCSI and Fibre Channel. Replace a dozen of your existing hard drives with the reliable 18GB Barracuda. Your network will thank you.** $1,700. (800) 732-4283; InfoLink No. 665	**IBM Deskstar 16GP** Sacrifice a little speed and space and go with this EIDE alternative that's more at home on your desktop. It's still fast, and at 16.8GB almost as big, but you save nearly enough to buy another server. $569. (800) 772-2227; InfoLink No. 666 **Verdict:** For bulletproof storage, stay with the Barracuda. SOHO networks, consider the Deskstar.

Peripherals

Getting images into your PC has never been cheaper or easier. It almost feels criminal to buy a color scanner for under $100 or to snag a full-featured digital camera well under the $1,000 mark. You'll find plenty of usability improvements in this year's crop of peripherals too, such as mice that get you around the Web in half the time, without the wear and tear on your wrist.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Reduce Resolution** You don't need to spend a lot for a high-resolution scanner or digital camera if you're just putting your images on the Web or in a black-and-white newsletter. Opt for an inexpensive model instead.
- **Buy a Bundle** If you plan to print your digital photos, save money with a digital camera and printer bundle from companies like Epson America and Hewlett-Packard. Some even include a scanner too.
- **Be Selective** As a rule, you want hardware that meets industry standards. But be realistic: If you don't play games, Sound Blaster compatibility isn't a deal-breaker.

	A-List*	Budget Pick*
Personal Document Scanner	**Visioneer PaperPort 3100** **Attention scanner-phobes: If you can drag and drop, you can easily add text and photos to your documents, e-mail, and Web pages thanks to the PaperPort 3100. Installation, scanning, and document management are a snap too.** $149 list price. (800) 787-7007; InfoLink No. 667	**Storm Technology EasyPhoto ImageWave** Don't settle for a sheetfed scanner when you can get a trim flatbed for under $100. You get 600-by-300-dpi scans and great software too. $99. (888) 438-3279; InfoLink No. 668 **Verdict:** Give up some ease of use and save some money with the ImageWave. But new users should stick with the PaperPort.

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QWIKFAX: 1-800-937-2094 (Document #1015)

Mitsubishi LCDs	LCD40	LCD50
Viewable size	14.0"	15.0"
Max Resolution	1024 x 768/75 Hz NI	1024 x 768/75 Hz NI
Weight	9.9 lbs.(4.5kg)	11.7 lbs.(5.3kg)
Dimensions (H,W,D)	14.7 x 14.0 x 6.3"	15.4 x 14.7 x 6.3"
Brightness	180 cd/m²	200 cd/m²
Viewing Angle	H: ±70°, V: +60, -50°	H: ±70°, V: +70, -50°
LCD Type	TFT Active Matrix	TFT Active Matrix

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Mac OS

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A-List: Hardware

	A-List*	Budget Pick*
Graphics Scanner	**Epson America Expression 636** **Even if you're color-blind you can produce professional-quality scans thanks to the Expression's expert tools. You get rich, detailed 36-bit color with its 600-by-1,200-dpi resolution. And for a speedy scanner of this caliber it's surprisingly affordable too.** $1,399. (800) 463-7766	**Plustek OpticPro 9636T** A 600-by-1,200-dpi scanner boasting 36-bit color for under $150—unbelievable! Its smallish built-in transparency adapter is excellent for scanning slides and negatives. $149. (800) 685-8088; InfoLink No. 669 **Verdict:** Save big with the OpticPro, but don't expect the professional tools of the Expression.
Digital Camera	**Kodak DC210 Zoom Camera** **This simple point-and-shoot camera is small but packs in a lot of features: 1,152-by-864-pixel resolution, optical and LCD viewfinders, flash with red-eye reduction, video-out capability, and infrared transfer. The results are beautiful, sharp images.** $899. (800) 235-6325; InfoLink No. 670	**Olympus D-220L** Here's an entry-level camera that's priced right yet doesn't skimp on features. Be prepared to give up high resolution, though. $399. (800) 347-4027; InfoLink No. 671 **Verdict:** The Olympus is fine for most home and business users. Those needing professional quality should splurge for the Kodak.
Sound Card	**Creative Labs AWE 64 Gold** **Its sound is pure gold, literally—thanks to its 14-karat RCA connectors. Combine that with 64 wavetable voices and 3-D sound and you've got unbeatable sound quality. Of course it's Sound Blaster–compatible for running your old DOS games too.** $150. (800) 998-5227; InfoLink No. 672	**Diamond Multimedia Monster Sound M80** Worth its $100 price tag, the Monster Sound makes you feel like you're actually part of the game. Its A3D audio, full PCI acceleration, and great software bundle are impressive. $100. (800) 468-5846; InfoLink No. 673 **Verdict:** The Monster Sound is fine for Windows, but for DOS game support, go for the Gold.
Speakers	**Altec Lansing Technologies ADA 310 PowerCube** **Who needs a home stereo system with these slick speakers? USB adds rich surround sound and unique all-in-one onscreen controls to the PowerCube. And these sleek, stylish speakers look as good as they sound.** $299. (800) 258-3288; InfoLink No. 674	**Labtec LCS-2420** First-class sound doesn't have to cost a fortune. This three-piece speaker set blows away the tinny-sounding speakers that came with your PC. $79. (360) 896-2000; InfoLink No. 675 **Verdict:** If you have an older system without USB, you'll want the LCS-2420. Otherwise, the PowerCube is a better investment.
Uninterruptible Power Supply	**APC Back-UPS Pro 650** **This UPS doesn't sweat El Niño, lightning, blackouts, or any other natural catastrophes. Thanks to its 650-VA load capacity, long battery life, and PowerChute plus software, your data is safe and secure. And it's priced right so your budget remains unscathed.** $265. (800) 877-4080; InfoLink No. 676	**MGE Pulsar Desktop 220+** Here's the VW Bug of UPSs: cool-looking, small, lightweight, and affordable. On the downside its 220-VA capacity and meager battery life don't cut it for well-stocked systems. $129. (800) 523-0142; InfoLink No. 677 **Verdict:** Buy the Pulsar for your assistant's system; get the Back-UPS for your powerhouse.
Input Device	**Logitech MouseMan+** **Go ahead: Scroll through that document without lifting a finger. The MouseMan+ is the ultimate in scroll-wheel mice. And you can't beat its MouseWare software for programming the buttons to perform the tasks you do most often.** $60. (800) 231-7717; InfoLink No. 678	**Kensington Mouse·in·a·Box** Forget the fancy wheels; you just want a plain-old mouse. The Mouse·in·a·Box is light on frills but has a nice feel, plus two customizable buttons. $20. (800) 535-4242; InfoLink No. 679 **Verdict:** The Mouse·in·a·Box is fine for purists, but the MouseMan+ is kinder to your wrist.

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Video Hardware

Graphics technology is on the fast track. Keeping up with each week's new flat-panel display or 3-D card will fill your garage with old hardware in six months, and leave your wallet screaming for mercy. Instead, look at the long term, pay for quality, and focus on what you really need.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Beware of Bundles** Watch the bundles on 3-D cards—a higher price may buy you games you don't need or applications you'll never use.
- **System Reality Check** Before you spring for that new graphics hardware, make sure your system can handle the upgrade. AGP graphics cards require the latest Pentium II systems.
- **No Show-offs** If you're on a budget, opt for mature technology over gee-whiz crowd pleasers. For the price of a flat panel you can buy three 17-inch CRT monitors.

	A-List*	Budget Pick*
High-Res 20/21-Inch Monitor	**Samsung Electronics America SyncMaster 21GLs** **Picture this: more Windows per square inch and razor-sharp text in your documents. The SyncMaster gives you a dazzling picture at a very good price. This is one upgrade that'll pay for itself in no time.** $1,479. (800) 933-4110; InfoLink No. 680	**Hitachi NSA SuperScan Pro 800** Give up a little image quality and save a few hundred dollars. For regular office work, you'll be hard-pressed to tell the difference. The other trade-off is slightly confusing controls. $1,149. (800) 441-4832; InfoLink No. 681 **Verdict:** The SyncMaster is the best deal all around, thanks to its excellent display quality.
High-Res 19-Inch Monitor	**Sony Electronics Multiscan GDM-400PS** **It's the perfect middle ground: a display that's larger than a 17-incher and less expensive than a 21-inch model. And the best of the new breed is the knockout Multiscan GDM-400PS. Its controls are the best of the lot too.** $1,000. (800) 352-7669; InfoLink No. 682	**Iiyama North America VisionMaster-450** Get even more room for about the same price as the best 17-inch display. The VisionMaster-450 has a sharp picture and friendly controls. $799. (800) 594-7480; InfoLink No. 683 **Verdict:** The VisionMaster is a great compromise for everyday work. For graphics tasks, step up to the Multiscan GDM-400PS.
High-Res 17-Inch Monitor	**Sony Electronics Multiscan GDM-200PS** **Get that same Sony high-quality picture and usability in a slightly smaller version. You can't go wrong with the Multiscan GDM-200PS's gorgeous picture, sharp text, and simple controls. You're worth it, aren't you?** $800. (800) 352-7669; InfoLink No. 684	**Iiyama North America VisionMaster Pro 17** Shave a chunk off the price of the Multiscan and go with this close second to the GDM-200PS. The VisionMaster Pro 17 boasts the same great picture as its 19-inch sibling. $579. (800) 594-7480; InfoLink No. 685 **Verdict:** Get the best, the Multiscan, if you can. If not, you'll do well with the VisionMaster Pro 17.
Flat-Panel Display	**NEC Technologies MultiSync LCD2000** **Impress your colleagues and intimidate the competition with this enormous yet ultrathin screen. No other flat panel gives you 20 inches of pure Windows that's simply dazzling and rock-solid. The price is still high, but falling steadily.** $6,000. (800) 632-4636; InfoLink 686	**Samsung Electronics America 400TFT** A drop in price makes this the best combination of price and picture—and coolness—around. $1,459. (800) 933-4110; InfoLink 687 **Verdict:** Spend big for the spacious and brilliant MultiSync if you can. The Samsung's a great compromise, but most people will want to wait until flat panels come down even more in price.
Graphics Accelerator	**Number Nine Revolution 3D** **You can't go wrong with this card. Impressive 2-D keeps you on the ball at work, and the 3-D power is respectable enough for both graphics professionals and after-hours gamers. With up to 16MB of memory, you won't outgrow it quickly either.** $219 for 8MB. (800) 438-6463; InfoLink 688	**ATI Xpert@Work** The same perfect balance of 2-D and 3-D graphics as the Revolution—for $50 less. $169. (905) 882-2600; InfoLink No. 689 **Verdict:** If your business is strictly two-dimensional, look no further than the Xpert@Work. But for heavy-duty graphics, the Revolution is what you need.

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A-List: Hardware

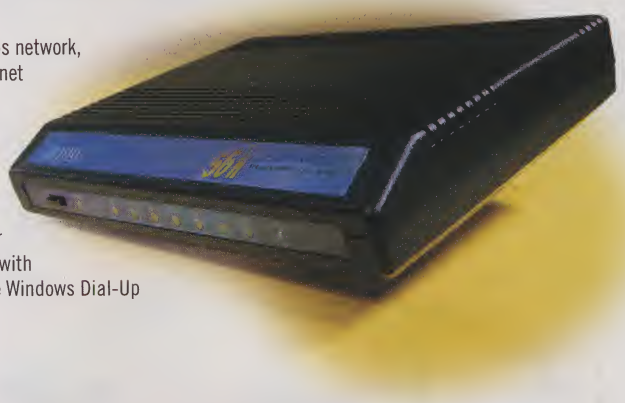
	A-List*	Budget Pick*
3-D Game Card	**Real 3D StarFighter** **If you're serious about gaming, you know you need AGP. And if you're serious about AGP, this is the board to buy. The Intel740 chip onboard pushes the AGP pipeline to awesome lengths and makes your favorite games come alive.** $249 for 8MB. (800) 393-7730; InfoLink No. 690	**Diamond Multimedia Stealth II Model S220** An affordable 3-D card that keeps up with the big boards. Even if you load it up with upgrade options like a TV tuner and DVD support, you still walk away with money in your pocket. $120. (800) 468-5846; InfoLink No. 691 **Verdict:** If your PC has AGP, get the StarFighter. If not, the Stealth II is a smart PCI choice.
Video Capture	**Digital Processing Systems DPS Spark** **Set up your own high-end video-editing station for less than a grand. The Spark gets video into your PC and back to tape faster than you can say *Action!* It's so easy to use, you'll look like a pro. You need a FireWire camera, though.** $799. (606) 371-5533; InfoLink No. 692	**Iomega Buz Multimedia Producer** Surprisingly sophisticated video and fast capture for an amazing price. The internal SCSI card keeps clips moving, while the external breakout box offers easy access. $199. (800) 697-8833; InfoLink No. 693 **Verdict:** For dropping video clips into presentations, the Buz is all you need.
Presentation Projector	**In Focus LP420** **It's like a mobile movie theater. Take your sizzling presentations on the road with this svelte projector. The LP420 delivers a bright, beautiful picture that's sure to keep them awake. At 6.8 pounds, the LP420 probably weighs less than your notebook.** $5,999. (800) 294-6400; InfoLink No. 694	**Lightware VP800** Not ready to cough up six grand? Pare down when you go on the road with this no-frills projector. You'll love its less-than-10-pound weight. $2,995. (800) 445-9396; InfoLink No. 695 **Verdict:** For occasional presentations the Lightware is fine, but regular showmen will want the In Focus.

Communication Hardware

Instantly grab the info you need from the Web or your LAN—it all hinges on the modem or network card you choose. You need at least a 56Kbps modem that meets the new V.90 standard. Even better, go with ISDN. For a growing network, it has to be a card that supports a 10/100 Ethernet connection. All of these devices are less expensive than you think.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **New and Improved** Make sure the 56Kbps modem you buy meets the new V.90 standard out of the box.
- **Network Planning** If you have a 10Mbps network, don't automatically buy a regular Ethernet card. Instead, buy one that supports both 10Mbps and 100Mbps, or Fast Ethernet. You won't have to replace the NICs when you upgrade your LAN.
- **Twice As Fast** Don't toss that old 28.8Kbps modem. Use it alongside your new modem for a dual-line connection with free line-bonding software, such as the Windows Dial-Up Networking patch.



	A-List*	Budget Pick*
High-Speed Fax Modem	**3Com U.S. Robotics 56K Faxmodem** **Get one of the first 56Kbps modems to meet the new V.90 standard. Connect at top speed with almost any ISP, thanks to the Faxmodem's dual x2 and V.90 support. Plus you get an amazing bundle of software.** $159 for internal modem, $179 for external modem. (800) 342-5877; InfoLink No. 696	**Shark Multimedia Leopard XT-56K** Flash! This inexpensive K56flex modem is instantly upgradable to the new V.90 standard. You'll love its telephony features too. $110. (800) 800-3321; InfoLink No. 697 **Verdict:** Pay a little more and invest in the Sportster's dual connections and well-rounded software bundle.

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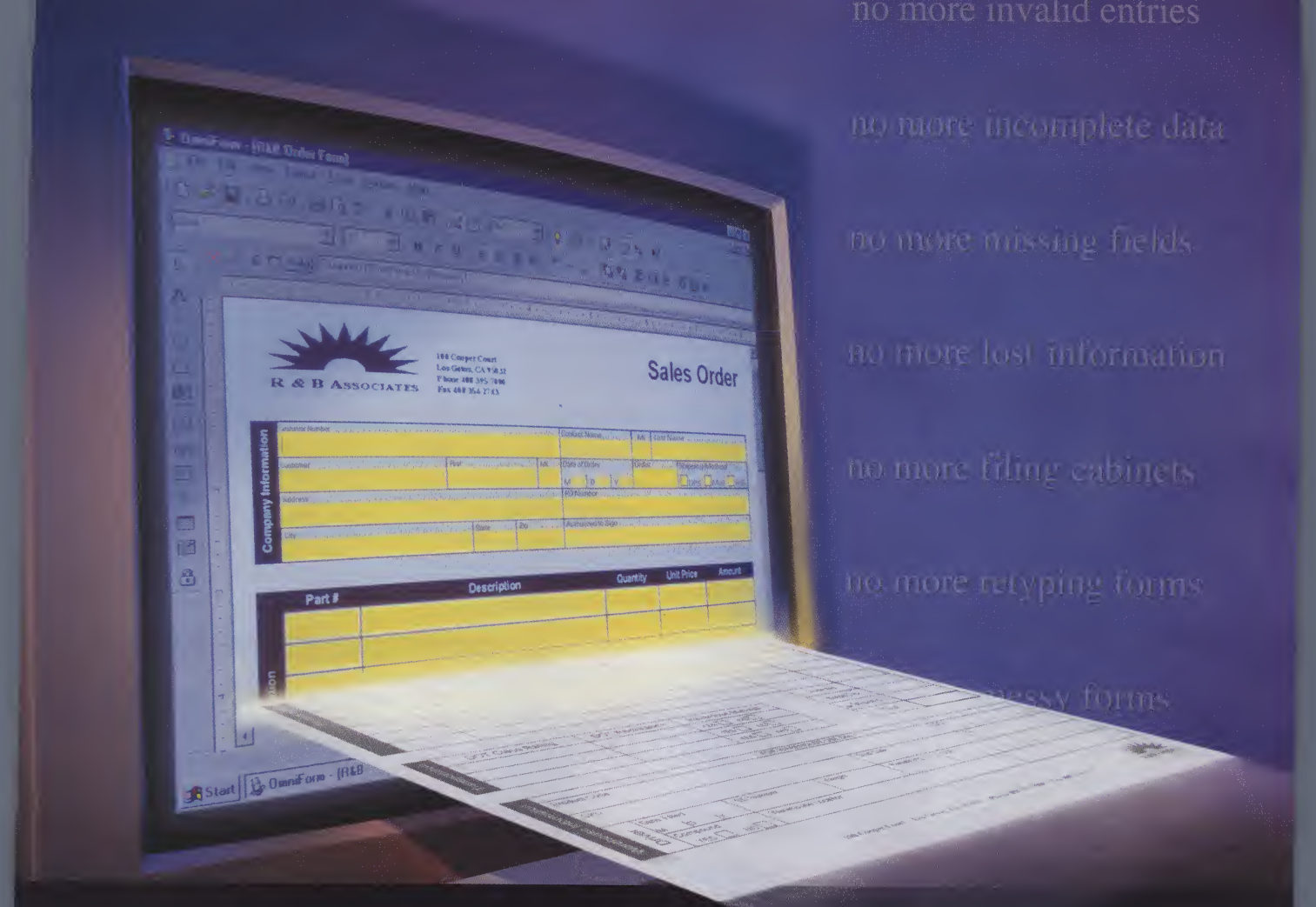

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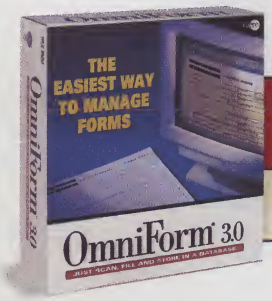

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A-List: Hardware

Desktop Videoconferencing	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	PictureTel Live200 **Trade in that cross-country plane ticket and get the Live200 for about the same price. Then have face-to-face meetings at a moment's notice over your ISDN lines. Even better: You can spend that travel budget on a company retreat.** $1,100. (800) 716-6000; InfoLink No. 698	**3Com Bigpicture Video Kit** Not everyone has the luxury of ISDN lines. With a regular phone line and the Bigpicture you can still conference with colleagues, just not as clearly. $299. (800) 342-5877; InfoLink No. 699 **Verdict:** ISDN users, don't settle for anything less than the Live200's quality picture. But over a phone line, the Bigpicture is great for getting started.
ISDN Adapter		
	3Com Courier I-Modem with ISDN/V.90 **A small-office solution that works as hard as you do. The I-Modem takes incoming 56Kbps calls but lets you dial out at up to 128Kbps. Bulletproof connections, V.90 support, and excellent software make it hard to resist.** $290 for internal modem, $326 for external modem. (800) 638-3266; InfoLink No. 700	**Hayes Accura ISDN** For basic ISDN that's a snap to set up, start here. You give up the ability to take incoming analog data calls, though. $249. (800) 377-4377; InfoLink No. 701 **Verdict:** Cough up the extra $40 and go with the Courier I-Modem's flexibility and bulletproof connections.
LAN Adapter		
	3Com Fast EtherLink XL PCI TX 10/100 Network Interface Card **Don't take any chances. The Fast EtherLink is the most popular network card for a reason: hassle-free setup, speedy performance, and the choice of regular or Fast Ethernet. All for an unbelievable price.** $94. (800) 638-3266; InfoLink No. 702	**3Com Fast EtherLink XL PCI TX 10/100 Network Interface Card** Get a reliable, flexible connection without paying through the nose with this can't-miss card. $94. (800) 638-3266; InfoLink No. 702 **Verdict:** The best is also the bargain. Install one of these on every PC in the office and you're worry-free for the long haul.
PC Card Modem		
	Ositech Communications Five of Hearts Trumpcard **Business travel is fraught with peril: lumpy beds, thin walls, and the dreaded PBX that will fry your modem. Thank goodness for the Five of Hearts, which bypasses the digital switchboard and goes right to an analog line.** $230. (888) 674-8324; InfoLink No. 703	**Simple Technology 56K Communicator** Here's another way to get around the hotel switchboard. The Communicator's built-in cellular support lets you connect your notebook to your cell phone. Works well at 56Kbps connections too. $169. (800) 367-7330; InfoLink No. 704 **Verdict:** It pays to be prepared. Spend a little more for the Five of Hearts' digital-bypass feature.
PC Card LAN Adapter		
	Xircom CreditCard Ethernet 10/100+Modem 56 **It's a lot more than a traveling network card. You also get a 56Kbps modem in the same slim package. Another nice touch: Its one-piece connector accepts both telephone and network plugs.** $322. (800) 438-4526; InfoLink No. 705	**TDK Systems Network Flyer 100** Speed demons will appreciate the Network Flyer's CardBus connection for unbeatable Fast Ethernet connections. $190. (800) 999-4835; InfoLink No. 706 **Verdict:** Don't pay for a modem if you don't need one. For basic network connections, get the Network Flyer instead.

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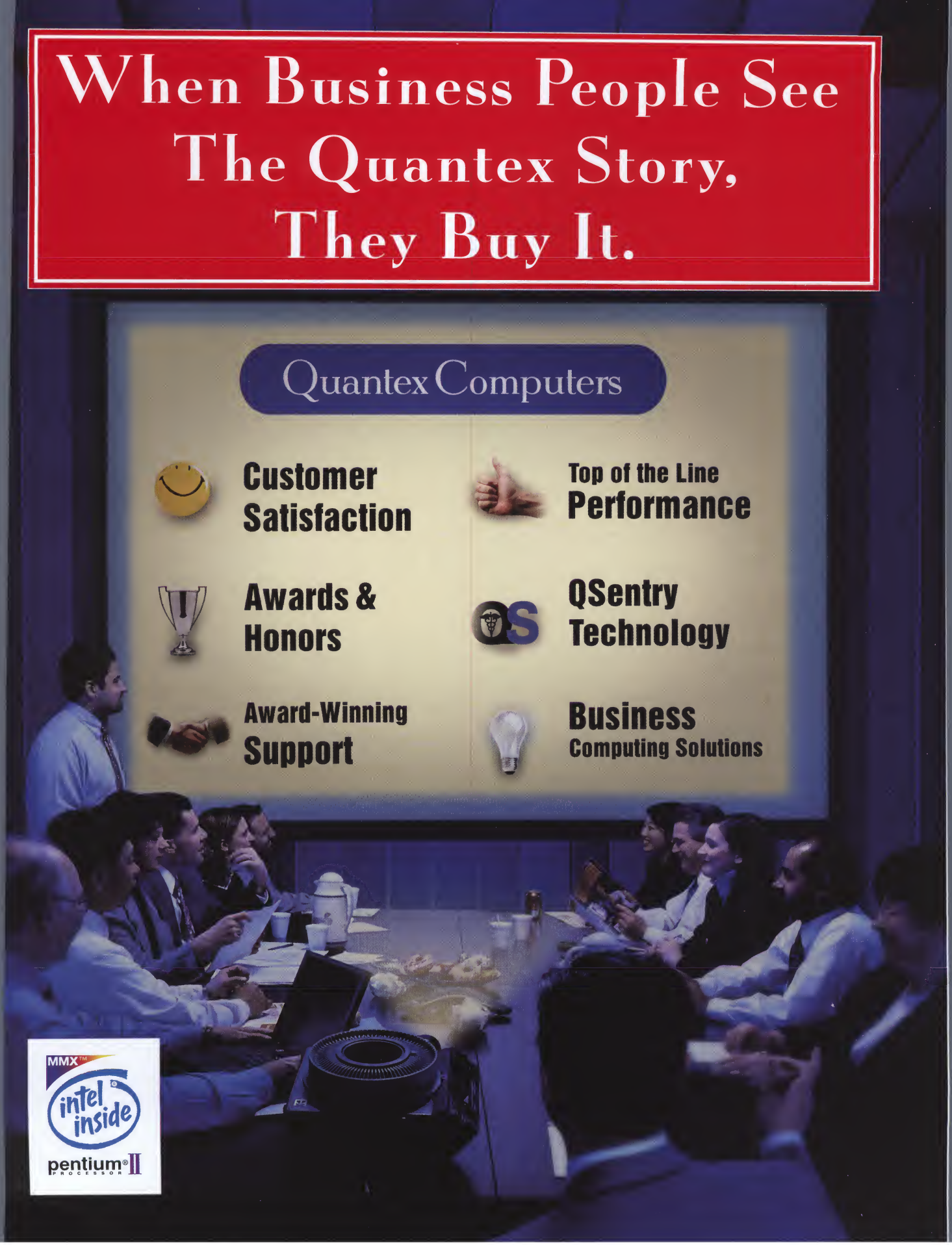
When Business People See The Quantex Story, They Buy It.



We give business people

Quantex Business Notebooks feature the Intel Pentium® processor with MMX™ technology

We make it our business to come up with computing solutions for your business

Quantex offers computing solutions that keep your business going — and growing. Our business desktops, servers and notebooks provide the ultimate in performance, reliability and value — increasing productivity, reducing downtime and lowering the total cost of PC ownership. Featuring such enhancements as the Intel Pentium® II processor and the Microsoft Windows NT operating system, Quantex business systems are the perfect solution for all your business needs.

QSentry for an extra sense of security

QSentry technology — from Quantex is like having a full-time tech expert in your PC, alerting you to possible hardware problems before they become critical. It allows the monitoring of system conditions like temperature, voltage and fan speed. And with Wake-on-LAN technology, system adjustments can be made remotely, saving time and money. And that's always good for business.

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Quantex is proud to be the recipient of *Computer Shopper's* 1997 Direct Channel Achievement Award for Systems, and *PC Computing's* Most Valuable Product award. We also won 12 Best Buy awards from *PC World* between Oct. 97 and Apr. 98, confirming our legendary value. As bottom line business people that's something you can really appreciate. Quantex gives value like no one else.

Computer Shopper
1997 Direct Channel Achievement Award for Systems

PC Computing
1997 Most Valuable Product:
QP6/266 SM-4x

PC Magazine
Editors' Choice Award
QP5/233 M-3 (12/97)

PC World
12 Best Buy Awards
Oct '97 - Apr '98

PC Computing
4-Star Rating (04/98)
Notebook Torture Test
H-1211 Notebook

PC Portables
Best Buy Award
H-1331 Notebook
(03/98)

a lot worth buying

Quantex Business Desktops feature the Intel Pentium® II processor

A technical support team that is one of the best in the business

Our support team is open for business 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. They're so good at providing expert help that Quantex earned a superior ranking of "Excellent" in a recent *Windows Magazine* survey that rated reliability, service and technical support. This ranking puts us up there in a select group that includes Dell and IBM. Not bad at all.

91% of Quantex owners said they'd buy again. That's what you call customer satisfaction

At Quantex, we make it our business to make great computers for your business. Of those surveyed by *Windows Magazine*, 91% said they would definitely buy another Quantex. You can't get a greater expression of customer approval than that.

WOULD YOU BUY AGAIN?

VENDOR	% WHO WOULD BUY THE SAME BRAND
Dell	92%
Quantex	91%
IBM	89%
Micron	81%
Gateway	80%
Acer	74%
Digital	69%
Toshiba	61%
Compaq	58%
Packard Bell	51%

Windows Magazine, 8/97

OVERALL RANKINGS
Technical Support Survey

PC VENDOR	GRADE
Quantex	Excellent
Dell	
IBM	
Compaq	Good
Gateway 2000	
Micron	
Acer	Fair
Toshiba	
Digital	Poor
Packard Bell	

Windows Magazine, 8/97

Call to receive a Free Quantex Product Solutions Guide For Business

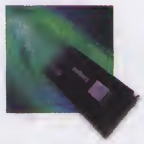
QUANTEX

1.800.787.8686

www.quantex.com

Our business PCs just became a better buy than ever.

Processing power that gets down to business



Exceeding all limits:
400MHz Pentium II processor

At speeds of up to 400MHz, Intel's latest, most powerful Pentium® II processors deliver unprecedented performance on all intense business applications. They also improve overall system performance with enhancements like an integrated 100MHz system bus and AGP graphics optimization.

Better Manageability means better value for your business

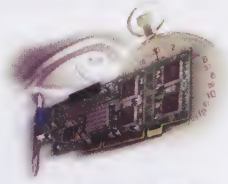
Quantex is famous for building top-of-the-line PCs that meet your bottom line. Now, we've incorporated network manageability into all of our business desktops, making them a greater value than ever. Our managed business desktops support standards-based technologies such as Wired for Management (WfM), DMI 2.0 instrumentation, LM78 hardware management, PC '97 and ACPI. This makes asset management, remote wake-up of systems over the LAN, and remote configuration and diagnostics easily accomplished. And for extra security, our QSentry technology monitors and protects systems from potentially critical problems.

19" Digital Monitor
(18.1" viewable area)

Visual performance that's bigger and better

Quantex is also improving graphics capabilities with spectacular 19" monitors. With an 18.1" viewable area, they offer up to 37% more viewing space than 17" monitors. And their .26mm dot pitch and ultra-high 1600x1200 resolution deliver exceptional image clarity, making your business applications look better than ever.

Graphics that make better business sense



Advanced AGP 3D
Graphics Processors

Optimized for the Pentium® II processor and Windows NT platforms, the Permedia 2 and the Intel740™ AGP graphics accelerators provide lifelike 3D rendering, ultra-smooth video and exceptional 2D performance. Experience high quality images and full AGP support for all your applications — on a desktop that's a better buy for your business.

MMX™ intel inside pentium® II PROCESSOR

Business Notebooks

Options: Mini-Docking Station...$169.00 • 2nd Lithium Ion Battery...$129.00 • PCMCIA NIC...$129.00 • Deluxe Carrying case...$99.00

Quantex H-1210 $1949

Business lease: $68/Mo.

- 233MHz Pentium® processor with MMX™ Technology
- Intel Mobile Module (I.M.M.) Architecture
- 12.1" SVGA Active Matrix Display
- 32MB SDRAM (expandable to 144MB)
- 512KB Secondary Cache
- 2GB HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Modular Floppy Drive
- PCMCIA K56flex protocol Fax/Modem*
- 24X Modular CD-ROM Drive
- PCI Bus with 128-bit graphics accelerator
- Integrated 16-bit Stereo Sound and Speakers
- Smart Lithium Ion Battery
- USB and Fast IR Ports
- Integrated Personal Touchpad
- MS Windows 95/*FREE* Upgrade to MS Windows 98+
- Corel Office Suite 8
- Carrying Case
- 24-hr./7-day Technical Support
- 3-year limited warranty on CPU and Main Memory
- 1-year parts and labor limited warranty on all other components

H-1210 w/200MHz Pentium processor w/MMX Technology...$1879

Quantex H-1330 $2399

Business lease: $84/Mo.

- 266MHz Pentium® processor with MMX™ Technology
- Intel Mobile Module (I.M.M.) Architecture
- 13.3" XGA Active Matrix Display
- 64MB SDRAM (expandable to 144MB)
- 512KB Secondary Cache
- 3GB HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Modular Floppy Drive
- PCMCIA K56flex protocol Fax/Modem*
- 24X Modular CD-ROM Drive
- PCI Bus with 128-bit graphics accelerator
- Integrated 16-bit Stereo Sound and Speakers
- Smart Lithium Ion Battery
- USB and Fast IR Ports
- Integrated Personal Touchpad
- MS Windows 95 or Windows NT Workstation 4.0 *FREE* Upgrade to MS Windows 98+
- Corel Office Suite 8
- Carrying Case
- 3-year limited warranty on CPU and Main Memory
- 1-year parts and labor limited warranty on all other components

H-1330 w/266MHz Pentium II processor.....$2699

Quantex H-1331 $2799

Business lease: $98/Mo.

- 266MHz Pentium® processor with MMX™ Technology
- Intel Mobile Module (I.M.M.) Architecture
- 13.3" XGA Active Matrix Display
- 64MB SDRAM (expandable to 144MB)
- 512KB Secondary Cache
- 4GB HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Modular Floppy Drive
- PCMCIA K56flex protocol Fax/Modem*
- 24X Modular CD-ROM Drive
- PCI Bus with 128-bit graphics accelerator
- Integrated 16-bit Stereo Sound and Speakers
- Smart Lithium Ion Battery
- 2nd Lithium Ion Battery
- Mini-Docking Station
- USB and Fast IR Ports
- Integrated Personal Touchpad
- MS Windows 95 or Windows NT Workstation 4.0 *FREE* Upgrade to MS Windows 98+
- MS Office '97 Small Business Edition
- Carrying Case
- 3-year limited warranty on CPU and Main Memory
- 1-year parts and labor limited warranty on all other components

H-1331 w/266MHz Pentium II processor.....$3099

Quantex H-1411 $3499

Business lease: $114/Mo.

- 266MHz Pentium® II Processor
- Intel Mobile Module (I.M.M.) Architecture
- 14.1" XGA Active Matrix Display
- 128MB SDRAM (expandable to 144MB)
- 512KB Secondary Cache
- 4GB HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Modular Floppy Drive
- PCMCIA K56flex protocol Fax/Modem*
- 24X Modular CD-ROM Drive
- PCI Bus with 128-bit graphics accelerator
- Integrated 16-bit Stereo Sound and Speakers
- Smart Lithium Ion Battery
- 2nd Lithium Ion Battery
- Mini-Docking Station
- USB and Fast IR Ports
- Integrated Personal Touchpad
- MS Windows 95 or Windows NT Workstation 4.0 *FREE* Upgrade to MS Windows 98+
- MS Office '97 Small Business Edition
- Carrying Case
- 3-year limited warranty on CPU and Main Memory
- 1-year parts and labor limited warranty on all other components

H-1411 w/233MHz Pentium II processor.....$3249

Business Desktops

Options: 100MB Internal Zip Drive /one cartridge...$79 • HP LaserJet 6L Printer...$379 • Business Audio Kit (Ensoniq Sound Card & Altec Lansing ACS-90 Speakers)...$49 • APC Back-UPS 280...$99 • APC Back-UPS 400...$129 • APC Back-UPS 600...$229 • Seagate 4/8GB TR-4 Tape Backup...$199

QP5/233 SB-1 $1049

Business lease: $37/Mo.

- 233MHz Pentium® Processor with MMX™ Technology
- 2 Universal Serial Bus (USB) Ports / DMI 2.0
- 32MB EDO Memory / 512KB Pipelined Burst Cache
- 2.1GB EIDE Mode 4 HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 64-bit 3D Graphics Card with 4MB RDRAM
- 15" Digital Monitor (13.8" viewable)
- Intel Pro 100 PCI Ethernet Adapter w/RJ-45
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Quantex Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 95/*FREE* Upgrade to MS Windows 98+
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service*
- 24-hr./7-day Technical Support
- QSentry Technology (Including Intel LANDesk Client Manager V.3.1)
- *Upgrade to Windows NT Workstation 4.0 for $99*

QP6/266 SB-1c (w/ Intel® Celeron™ processor). .$1149

QP6/266 SB-1 (w/ Pentium® II Processor). .$1249

QP6/266 SB-2 $1499

Business lease: $53/Mo.

- 266MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 2 Universal Serial Bus (USB) Ports / DMI 2.0
- 32MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 4.3GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Intel740™ AGP Graphics with 8MB SDRAM *Upgrade to 3D Labs Permedia 2 w/8MB SGRAM for $49*
- 17" Digital Monitor (15.8" viewable)
- Choice of Intel Pro 100 Ethernet Controller with Wake-On-LAN+ Technology or K56flex protocol Fax/Modem*
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows 95/*FREE* Upgrade to MS Windows 98+
- MS Office '97 Small Business Edition
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**
- 24-hr./7-day Technical Support
- QSentry Technology (Including Intel LANDesk Client Manager V.3.1)
- *Upgrade to Windows NT Workstation 4.0 for $99*

QP6/266 SB-2c (w/ Intel® Celeron™ processor). .$1399

QP6/300 SB-2 (w/ Pentium® II Processor). .$1649

QP6/333 SB-2 (w/ Pentium® II Processor). .$1749

QP6/350 SB-3 $2099

Business lease: $74/Mo.

- 350MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 2 Universal Serial Bus (USB) Ports / DMI 2.0
- 64MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 6.4GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Intel740™ AGP Graphics with 8MB SDRAM *Upgrade to 3D Labs Permedia 2 w/8MB SGRAM for $49*
- 17" Digital Monitor w/NEC ChromaClear CRT (15.9" viewable; .25 dp; 1600x1200 max. resolution)
- Choice of Intel Pro 100 Ethernet Controller with Wake-On-LAN+ Technology or K56flex protocol Fax/Modem*
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows NT 4.0 Workstation
- MS Office '97 Small Business Edition
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**
- 24-hr./7-day Technical Support
- QSentry Technology (Including Intel LANDesk Client Manager V.3.1)

QP6/300 SB-3 (w/ Pentium® II Processor). .$1799

QP6/333 SB-3 (w/ Pentium® II Processor). .$1899

QP6/400 SB-3 (w/ Pentium® II Processor). .$2299

QP6/400 SB-4 $2599

Business lease: $91/Mo.

- 400MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 2 Universal Serial Bus (USB) Ports / DMI 2.0
- 64MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 8.4GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 3D Labs Permedia 2 AGP Graphics Card with 8MB SGRAM
- 19" Digital Monitor (18.1" viewable)
- Choice of Intel Pro 100 Ethernet Controller with Wake-On-LAN+ Technology or K56flex protocol Fax/Modem*
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows NT 4.0 Workstation
- MS Office '97 Small Business Edition
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**
- 24-hr./7-day Technical Support
- QSentry Technology (Including Intel LANDesk Client Manager V.3.1)
- *Upgrade to 100MB Internal Zip Drive for $79*

QP6/300 SB-4 (w/ Pentium® II Processor) $2049

QP6/333 SB-4 (w/ Pentium® II Processor) $2199

QP6/350 SB-4 (w/ Pentium® II Processor) $2399

Microsoft Office 97

Small Business Edition includes: Word 97 · Excel 97 · Outlook 97 · Publisher 97 · Small Business Financial Manager 97 · Automap Streets Plus

Business Servers

QP6/333 SBS-1 $2299

Business lease: $81/Mo.

- 333MHz Pentium® II Processor (Dual-Processor Upgradable)
- 512KB L2 ECC Cache
- 64MB ECC SDRAM Memory
- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 4.5GB Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 Hard Drive (7200 rpm)
- Adaptec Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 Controller
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Intel EtherExpress Pro™ 100B Fast Ethernet w/RJ-45
- Server Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- Intel LANDesk Server Manager
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**
- 24-hr./7-day Technical Support
- *Call for Special Server Support Options*
- *Add Windows NT Server 4.0 w/ 10 Client License $799*

QP6/266 SBS-1 (w/ Pentium® II Processor). .$2049

QP6/300 SBS-1 (w/ Pentium® II Processor). .$2199

Call for specials on 350/400MHz Pentium II processor-based systems

QP6/333 SBS-2 $3899

Business lease: $127/Mo.

- 333MHz Pentium® II Processor (Dual-Processor Upgradable)
- 512KB L2 ECC Cache
- 64MB ECC SDRAM Memory
- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 4GB Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 Hard Drive (7200 rpm)
- 15" Digital Monitor (13.8" viewable)
- Adaptec Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 Controller
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem*
- Intel EtherExpress Pro™ 100B Fast Ethernet w/RJ-45
- Server Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- Microsoft® BackOffice® Small Business Server Suite
- Intel LANDesk Server Manager
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**
- 24-hr./7-day Technical Support
- *Call for Special Server Support Options*

QP6/266 SBS-2 (w/ Pentium® II Processor). .$3649

QP6/300 SBS-2 (w/ Pentium® II Processor). .$3799

Call For A Free Upgrade to MS Natural Keyboard Elite

- Ergonomically designed for greater comfort
- Helps promote a straighter wrist posture
- Split and Rotated Key Design

Receive a free upgrade to the MS Natural Keyboard Elite with every Quantex Business Desktop purchase.

Limited time offer. Offer only applies to Quantex SB Series business desktops.

FREE UPGRADE

Order now and receive a free upgrade to Microsoft Windows 98+

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www.quantex.com

Value Multimedia Series

Software: Corel Office Suite 8 • MS Money '97 • Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia • Body Works 6.0 • Amazon Trail II American Heritage Talking Dictionary • Internet the City • Compton's Reference Collection • Dr. Solomons Find-Virus • MS Internet Explorer 4.0

QP5/233 M-1 $1149

Lease: $41/Mo.

- 233MHz Pentium® Processor with MMX™ Technology
- 32MB EDO Memory / 512KB Pipelined Burst Cache
- 3.2GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 64-bit 3D Graphics Card with 4MB RDRAM
- 15" Digital Monitor (13.8" viewable)
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Ensoniq 32-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec-Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- Quantex Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 95/***FREE*** **Upgrade to MS Windows 98+**
- Value Multimedia Software Bundle
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

QP6/266 M-1c (w/ Intel® Celeron™ processor).$1249
QP6/300 M-1x(with Pentium II processor).$1449

QP6/266 M-2x $1499

Lease: $53/Mo.

- 266MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 32MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 4.3GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Toshiba MPACT2 3D Media Accelerator w/4MB RDRAM
- 17" Digital Monitor (15.8" viewable)
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 2nd-Generation DVD-ROM Drive w/MPACT2 Decoding
- Ensoniq 32-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec-Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 95/***FREE*** **Upgrade to MS Windows 98+**
- Value Multimedia Software Bundle
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

QP6/233 M-2x(with Pentium II processor).$1449
QP6/300 M-2x(with Pentium II processor).$1649

QP6/333 M-3x $1799

Lease: $63/Mo.

- 333MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 64MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 6.4GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Intel740™ AGP Graphics with 8MB SDRAM
- 17" Digital Monitor (15.8" viewable)
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Ensoniq 32-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec-Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 95/***FREE*** **Upgrade to MS Windows 98+**
- Value Multimedia Software Bundle
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

QP6/266 M-3x(with Pentium II processor).$1599
QP6/300 M-3x(with Pentium II processor).$1699
QP6/350 M-3x(with Pentium II processor).$1999

QP6/350 M-4x $2299

Lease: $81/Mo.

- 350MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 64MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 8.4GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Intel740™ AGP Graphics with 8MB SDRAM
- 19" Digital Monitor (18.1" viewable)
- Internal 100MB Zip Drive with one cartridge
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Ensoniq 32-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec-Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 95/***FREE*** **Upgrade to MS Windows 98+**
- Value Multimedia Software Bundle
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

QP6/300 M-4X(with Pentium II processor).$1999
QP6/333 M-4X(with Pentium II processor).$2149
QP6/400 M-4X(with Pentium II processor).$2499

Power Multimedia Series

Software: MS Office '97 Small Business Edition • MS Money '97 • Office Mate • Day Planner Pro • Power Business Plans • Form Designer Pro • Project Manager Pro • Labels Unlimited • Compton's Reference Collection • Dr. Solomons Find-Virus • MS Internet Explorer 4.0

QP6/266 SM-1c $1349

Lease: $48/Mo.

- Intel® Celeron™ Processor 266MHz
- 32MB SDRAM Memory
- 4.3GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Intel740™ AGP Graphics with 8MB SDRAM
- 15" Digital Monitor (13.8" viewable)
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Ensoniq 32-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec-Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows 95/***FREE*** **Upgrade to MS Windows 98+**
- Power Multimedia Software Bundle
- Microsoft Office '97 Small Business Edition
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**
- *Call for systems featuring 233MHz Pentium processor w/MMX Technology*

QP6/300 SM-1x(with Pentium II processor). $1549
QP6/333 SM-1x(with Pentium II processor). $1649

QP6/266 SM-2x $1649

Lease: $58/Mo.

- 266MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 64MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 4.3GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Toshiba MPACT2 3D Media Accelerator w/8MB RDRAM
- 17" Digital Monitor (15.8" viewable)
- *Upgrade to 17" Monitor w/NEC ChromaClear CRT for $99*
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 2nd-Generation DVD-ROM Drive w/MPACT2 Decoding
- Ensoniq 32-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec-Lansing ACS-45 Speakers with subwoofer
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows 95/***FREE*** **Upgrade to MS Windows 98+**
- Power Multimedia Software Bundle
- Microsoft Office '97 Small Business Edition
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

QP6/233 SM-2x(with Pentium II processor). $1599
QP6/300 SM-2x(with Pentium II processor). $1799
QP6/333 SM-2x(with Pentium II processor). $1899

QP6/333 SM-3x $1999

Lease: $70/Mo.

- 333MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 64MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 6.4GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Intel740™ AGP Graphics with 8MB SDRAM
- 17" Digital Monitor w/NEC ChromaClear CRT (15.9" viewable; .25 dp; 1600x1200 max. resolution)
- 100MB Internal Zip Drive with one cartridge
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Ensoniq 32-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec-Lansing ACS-45 Speakers with subwoofer
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows 95/***FREE*** **Upgrade to MS Windows 98+**
- Power Multimedia Software Bundle
- Microsoft Office '97 Small Business Edition
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

QP6/266 SM-3x(with Pentium II processor). $1799
QP6/300 SM-3x(with Pentium II processor). $1899
QP6/350 SM-3x(with Pentium II processor). $2199

QP6/350 SM-4x $2449

Lease: $86/Mo.

- 350MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 64MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 11.5GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Intel740™ AGP Graphics with 8MB SDRAM
- 19" Digital Monitor (18.1" viewable)
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 32X Max EIDE CD-ROM Drive
- Ensoniq 32-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec-Lansing ACS-45 Speakers with subwoofer
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows 95/***FREE*** **Upgrade to MS Windows 98+**
- Power Multimedia Software Bundle
- Microsoft Office '97 Small Business Edition
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**
- *Upgrade to 100MB Internal Zip Drive for $79*

QP6/300 SM-4x(with Pentium II processor). $2149
QP6/333 SM-4x(with Pentium II processor). $2249
QP6/400 SM-4x(with Pentium II processor). $2649

Super Multimedia

QP6/350 M-4x SE $1999

Lease: $70/Mo.

- 350MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 64MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 4.3GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Toshiba MPACT2 3D Media Accelerator w/8MB RDRAM
- 17" Digital Monitor w/NEC ChromaClear CRT (15.9" viewable; .25 dp; 1600x1200 max. resolution)
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 2nd-Generation DVD-ROM Drive w/MPACT2 Decoding
- Ensoniq 32-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec-Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 95/***FREE*** **Upgrade to MS Windows 98+**
- Value Multimedia Software Bundle
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

QP6/300 M-4X SE(with Pentium II processor). .$1749
QP6/333 M-4X SE(with Pentium II processor). .$1849
QP6/400 M-4X SE(with Pentium II processor). .$2199

QP6/400 SM-4x SE $2999

Lease: $105/Mo.

- 400MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 128MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 11.5GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Intel740™ AGP Graphics with 8MB SDRAM
- 19" Digital Monitor (18.1" viewable)
- 100MB Internal Zip Drive with one cartridge
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 2nd-Generation DVD-ROM Drive w/Decoder Board
- Ensoniq 32-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec-Lansing ACS-490 Speakers with subwoofer
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows 95/***FREE*** **Upgrade to MS Windows 98+**
- Power Multimedia Software Bundle
- Microsoft Office '97 Small Business Edition
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

QP6/300 SM-4x SE(with Pentium II processor). $2499
QP6/333 SM-4x SE(with Pentium II processor). $2599
QP6/350 SM-4x SE(with Pentium II processor). $2799

Best Buy Specials

M-Series Best Buy $2399

Lease: $84/Mo.

- 400MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 32MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 6.4GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Toshiba MPACT2 3D Media Accelerator w/8MB RDRAM
- 19" Digital Monitor (18.1" viewable)
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 2nd-Generation DVD-ROM Drive w/MPACT2 Decoding
- Ensoniq 32-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
- Altec-Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- Quantex ATX Mid Tower Case
- 104-Key Keyboard with MS Mouse
- MS Windows 95/***FREE*** **Upgrade to MS Windows 98+**
- Value Multimedia Software Bundle
- 3-year limited warranty with 1-year On-Site Service**

FREE UPGRADE
Order now and receive a free upgrade to Microsoft Windows 98+

SM-Series Best Buy $2699

Lease: $95/Mo.

- 400MHz Pentium® II Processor
- 64MB SDRAM Memory / 512KB Secondary Cache
- 8.4GB Ultra ATA HD / 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Toshiba MPACT2 3D Media Accelerator w/8MB RDRAM
- 19" Digital Monitor (18.1" viewable)
- 100MB Internal Zip Drive with one cartridge
- K56flex protocol Fax/Modem* w/Voice Mail and Speakerphone
- 2nd-Generation DVD-ROM Drive w/MPACT2 Decoding
- Ensoniq 32-Bit Wavetable Sound Card
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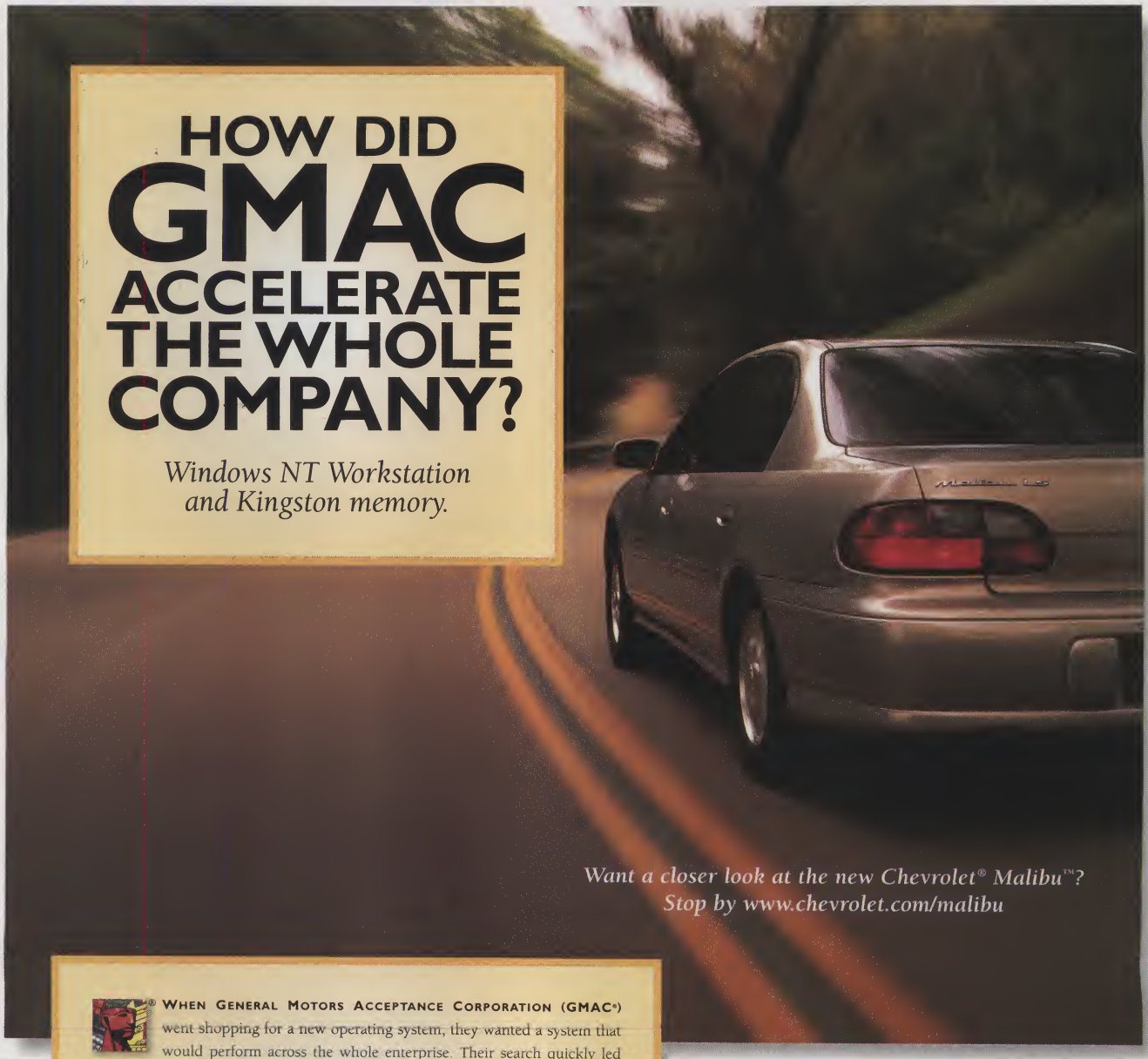

WHEN GENERAL MOTORS ACCEPTANCE CORPORATION (GMAC®) went shopping for a new operating system, they wanted a system that would perform across the whole enterprise. Their search quickly led them to a logical destination: Microsoft® Windows NT® Workstation and Kingston® memory. The results? Having enough memory on every desktop allowed Windows NT Workstation to deliver the performance GMAC was after. And with true multitasking, 32-bit support, and the added memory, people throughout the company gained 30 to 60 minutes of productivity per day. "Windows NT Workstation gave us the enterprise solution we were looking for," said Louis Polite, GMAC's global infrastructure manager. "And loading our desktops with Kingston memory made the whole migration much easier—for us and our users. Thanks to Kingston and Microsoft, we've taken the whole enterprise to the next level of computing." Want a solution that works for your company today and for the long haul? Call (888) 435-5164. Or visit our Web site at www.kingston.com/gmac.

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A-List: Software

So much for iron. It's apps that make hay. Software pushes the levers and pulls the chains on what we euphemistically call work. But too often the only question we ask about our applications is, should I upgrade? A far more pertinent question: Is it time to change programs entirely?

The answer for basic productivity programs is . . . a reluctant no. Microsoft owns the show. We don't like this fact any better than you do—and we've got gripes aplenty about Word, Excel, and Access. Besides, company towns give us the creeps. But if your job depends on word processing, spreadsheets, and databases, these are the best bets going. Hold your nose and buy them. A better idea—Get Office 97. It wraps the trio into an integrated package loaded with extras.

Once you stray from the superhighway of basic productivity, however, the terrain grows far more varied. Intuit's Quicken Deluxe 98 pays for itself many times over in investment advice, research, and online bill payment. No other personal finance package even comes close. Ditto the company's TurboTax Deluxe, which can save you a fortune. Plus it eliminates the need for you to endure another meeting with your accountant.

For contact management, GoldMine 4.0 is a sales team's best ally. Pricey? Yes, it's $695 for five users. But remember, collaboration makes the cash register ring. If you're looking for a stand-alone information manager, get Microsoft Outlook 98, which is absolutely free for Office 97 and Internet Explorer 4 users. Its flexibility and Web smarts make it ideal for managing everyone's schedule—from mailroom clerks to CEOs.

When it comes to graphics software, Microsoft's PowerPoint 97 is the best presentation program going. For professional-strength graphics, Adobe is unparalleled. Its PageMaker 6.5 reigns king for page layout, and Adobe Photoshop 5.0 is the ultimate digital darkroom. For serious computer drawing, nothing beats Illustrator 7.0. But here's the bargain of the decade: CorelDraw 8 covers all the bases for less than the price of a single package. For most businesses, it's plenty powerful.

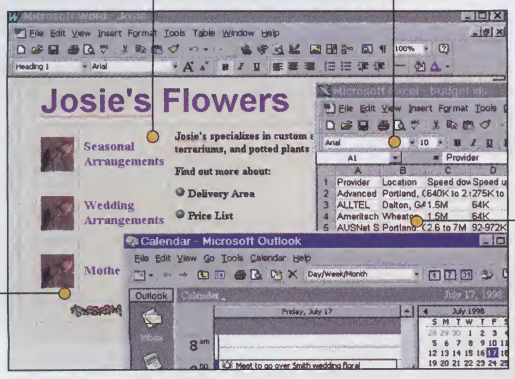
When it comes to utilities, Quarterdeck's ViruSweep is still your best defense against rogue code. It costs less than a modest business lunch, yet offers free updates. It even scans your Internet downloads before they slither onto your drive. As for other utilities, Caere's OmniPage Pro keeps getting better and better. And Traveling Software's LapLink 7.5 for Windows 95 keeps your notebook and desktop PCs on speaking terms.

WHAT YOU GIVE UP

Top-flight apps don't have to cost a fortune; there are budget alternatives that do the job for less than $100. Be prepared to forgo the bells and whistles, though.

Wise Wizards: The best apps have guides that walk you through complex tasks, but with less expensive options be prepared to forfeit those helpers and figure things out yourself.

It's Usability, Stupid: Where do budget apps cut corners first? Typically in the interface; it often makes you work harder to get the job done.

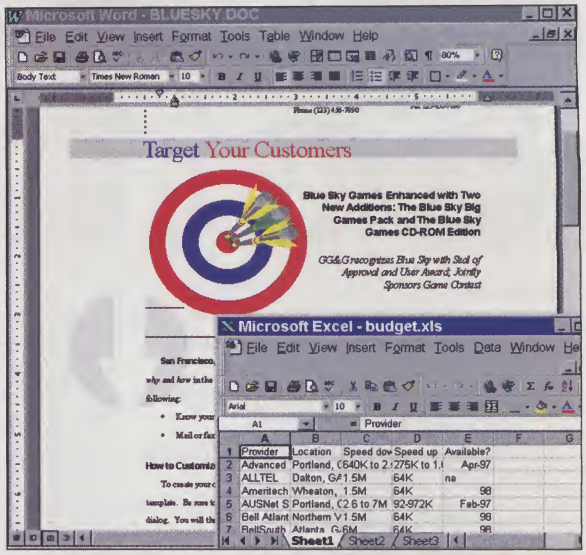


Software Specialists: When you buy utilities strictly by the price tag, you often get fewer tools in the bargain. Complete suites do more than just one job, such as sniff out viruses.

Current Content: Business apps without hooks to updated Web content are a rare breed. When you go with a budget product, you may not have access to as many extras—or you may be charged for them.

Desktop Applications

Your spreadsheet or word processor is probably just as important to your business as the telephone. So is your entire business software suite, for that matter, which has eclipsed sales of individual applications this year. Now you can get much more for less money, including better integration among applications and the Internet.



MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Bundle Up** Don't buy business apps piecemeal; invest in a suite and get extras like a contact manager and an e-mail manager. Also, if you're buying a new PC, make sure it comes preloaded with software you'll actually use, instead of some hobbled version.
- **Latest and Greatest** Be sure you buy the most recent version of an application. For Office 97, ask for Service Release 1; for WordPerfect Suite 8, get Service Pack 3.
- **Built to Order** The top software suites come in several flavors. Buy the right one for your business. Office 97 Professional, for example, includes Access 97. The Small Business Edition, on the other hand, subs in Publisher 97.

Software Suite	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	Microsoft Office 97 Professional **Practically all you need to run your business. A suite-wide interface puts the tools you use most at your fingertips—this plus easy Web conversion make Office 97 the champ. You'll be glad you spent a little more money for this essential suite.** $599. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 713	**Corel WordPerfect Suite 8 Professional** This well-connected suite is a Web-oriented business's best friend. Convert any document to a Web page instantly. $399. (800) 772-6735; InfoLink No. 714 **Verdict:** WordPerfect fans, upgrade now. All others, choose Office 97 for its first-rate usability and premier apps.
Word Processor		
	Microsoft Word 97 **It's better than the best administrative assistant. There are toolbars for every job, and intuitive help is always just a click away. Word 97 handles tables deftly and even lets you draw them any way you like.** $339. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 715	**Corel WordPerfect Suite 8** Only WordPerfect has the Property Bar—a toolbar that changes according to the task—and the indispensable Reveal Codes feature. $299. (800) 772-6735; InfoLink No. 716 **Verdict:** If all you do is word processing, consider the infinitely customizable WordPerfect. For most businesses, though, Word 97 is the best choice.
Spreadsheet		
	Microsoft Excel 97 **You don't need to appreciate the beauty of a PivotTable to recognize the advantages of Excel 97. It automates many tasks you used to have to do manually, plus it lets you preview charts. Includes dozens of Web hooks too.** $339. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 717	**Corel Quattro Pro 8** Report due in an hour? Quattro Pro's Chart Expert sweats the details so you don't have to. Included in Corel's $299 WordPerfect Suite 8. (800) 772-6735; InfoLink No. 727 **Verdict:** Excel 97 rules—and should be your pick, especially if you use Office 97. But Quattro Pro works for small shops on a budget.
Database		
	Microsoft Access 97 **Take control of your information—whether you're a database beginner or a professional. Access 97 offers top-notch design tools, powerful synchronization, and the ability to publish your live data to the Web in minutes.** $339. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 718	**Lotus Approach 97** Its intuitive, notebook-style interface helps you warm up quickly to the chore of putting your business info in a database. $105. (800) 343-5414; InfoLink No. 719 **Verdict:** Approach is perfect for beginners who want to build straightforward databases. For more flexibility and power, choose Access 97.

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– PC Computing, May 1998

"StarFighter: True AGP Superstar."
– PC World, April 1998

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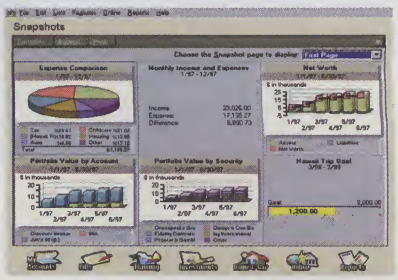
MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Suite Deal** If you already use Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition, take advantage of the included Small Business Financial Manager Excel add-on. It can't replace stand-alone finance software, but it helps you mind your bottom line.
- **Profit Sharing** Choose accounting software that allows for multiple users, like Peachtree's offerings.



	A-List*	Budget Pick*
Personal Finance Manager	**Intuit Quicken Deluxe 98** **It's not the best-selling finance software for nothing. Use it to manage all your assets—from bank accounts to stock portfolios to 401(k) funds. Download account data from banks, creditors, and investments. Plus get tax-prep pointers.** $60. (800) 446-8848; InfoLink No. 720	**Microsoft Money 98 Financial Suite** Current Microsoft Money users: Upgrade to Money 98 today. It's easier to use than ever. You'll pay for online info, though. $55. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 721 **Verdict:** Investment junkies and new users should go with Quicken Deluxe 98 for its ease of use and free online resources.
Business Accounting	**Intuit QuickBooks Pro 5.0** **Service and retail businesses, look no further than QuickBooks Pro (and cancel your plans to take an accounting course). Set up your books in no time with handy flowchart menus, and print hundreds of reports with ease.** $199. (800) 446-8848; InfoLink No. 722	**Peachtree Accounting for Windows 5.0** Flexible views make entering info a snap for beginners. Excellent inventory tracking too. $129. (800) 228-0068; InfoLink No. 723 **Verdict:** Manufacturing shops and those that need network support should check out Peachtree. Other businesses, stick with QuickBooks Pro.
Tax Software	**Intuit TurboTax Deluxe** **The closest thing to a CPA-in-a-box. Keep up with new tax laws, run an audit check on your return, and even file electronically for free. And you're not done with TurboTax just yet: Get pointers on how to plan better—and save more—next year.** $50. (800) 446-8848; InfoLink No. 724	**Block Financial Kiplinger TaxCut** A browser-like interface walks you through the tax-preparation process and checks your work for you. Plus electronic filing is free. $20. (800) 235-4060; InfoLink No. 725 **Verdict:** At less than half the price, TaxCut is the sweetest tax bargain around, although TurboTax is still one step ahead.

Networking Software

You can't afford to make a mistake. The software that's fueling your network has to be the best: bulletproof, easy to use, and full of options. Surprisingly, the top products are often the biggest bargains too.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Cheaper by the Dozen** It's not only the big players who get corporate discounts. If you have a small to medium-size network—anything over 25 clients—ask for volume discounts on networking software.
- **Lay Down the Law** Before you roll out Web and e-mail access to the masses, establish a written policy on how it's used. This will cut down on wasted resources—and potential litigation.

	A-List*	Budget Pick*
Network Operating System	**Microsoft Windows NT Server 4.0** **The bad news is that NT Server 5.0 is delayed until next year. The good news? NT Server 4.0 is still the best OS for businesses, thanks to its comprehensive administration tools and the bundled Internet Information Server.** $809 (includes ten client access licenses). (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 726	**Microsoft Windows NT Server 4.0** It's stable, secure, and runs all your favorite apps. No other operating system can compare to Windows NT when it comes to business. $809 (includes ten client access licenses). (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 726 **Verdict:** For a stable and secure office network, Windows NT Server 4.0 can't be matched.

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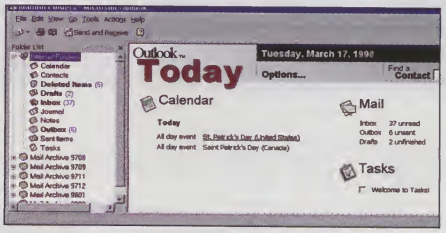
Groupware	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	Novell GroupWise 5.2 **Share everything—or keep your ideas to yourself. This powerful groupware package's excellent messaging and collaboration tools are designed to grow with you. What's more, it supports all major Internet protocols.** $718 for five clients. (800) 453-1267; InfoLink No. 728	**Lotus Notes 4.5** Powered by Lotus's Domino Web Server, Notes brings easy Web access, shared calendars, and improved Windows NT compatibility. $69 per client. (800) 343-5414; InfoLink No. 729 **Verdict:** With Notes you save money up front, but you pay hefty consultant fees—setup is no easy task.
Small Office Network Server		
	Microsoft BackOffice Small Business Server **Finally! A server that you can set up in hours, not days. It's complete too: BackOffice includes e-mail, an intranet, Web hosting, and network monitoring.** $1,499 for server plus five clients. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 730	**Novell NetWare for Small Business 4.11** NetWare comes well-equipped for all your needs—though it's not as fully stocked as BackOffice. $895 for server plus five clients. (800) 346-6855; InfoLink No. 731 **Verdict:** You don't want to count pennies when it comes to setting up a network. Make an investment in BackOffice's top-notch usability.
E-mail		
	Qualcomm Eudora Pro Email 4.0 **A single e-mail account? You've got to be joking. Most of us juggle multiple Internet mailboxes and need Eudora Pro to keep tabs on the lot. You'll wonder how you ever got along without its industrial-strength filtering.** $39 for single user. (800) 238-3672; InfoLink No. 732	**Qualcomm Eudora Light** If you're still not convinced you need Eudora Pro, try the free version and watch yourself get hooked. You may end up upgrading after all to get better filtering and mail management. Free. (800) 238-3672; InfoLink No. 733 **Verdict:** Cut to the chase and get Eudora Pro. But if you must, try the Light version first.
LAN Management Tool		
	Intel LANDesk Management Suite 6 **It's a network manager's dream: a single app that handles everything. You get virus protection, help-desk support, and remote client control. Plus its elegant console lets you mind everything with drag-and-drop ease.** $50 per node for a 1,000-node license. (800) 538-3373; InfoLink No. 734	**Intel LANDesk Management Suite 6** Don't take any chances. Go with the management tools you know you can trust. $50 per node for a 1,000-node license. (800) 538-3373; InfoLink No. 734 **Verdict:** When it comes to network management, one size does fit all—and best of all, LANDesk won't break your budget.

Personal Productivity Software

Don't lose touch with the office when you travel. Count on these products to work with the Web so you can stay on top of things no matter where you are. View schedules, contacts, project status, and even access documents.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Suite Buys** Before you buy a contact manager or an information manager, check out your business application suite. Most suites include excellent products, like Outlook 98, that tackle the job.
- **Two for One** If you buy a contact manager, hold off on that new e-mail package. The better contact managers build in an e-mail client.



Contact Manager	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	GoldMine 4.0 **Contacts are your lifeblood and GoldMine knows it. Here are all the tools you need to not only manage your contacts, but make the most of them. There's also group scheduling, e-mail, and call tracking.** $170 for stand-alone version, $695 for five-user license. (800) 654-3526; InfoLink No. 736	**GoldMine 4.0** We wouldn't lie: It takes a little while to get to know its ins and outs. But once you do, you'll rely on GoldMine for everything. $170 for stand-alone version, $695 for five-user license. (800) 654-3526; InfoLink No. 736 **Verdict:** You get top-notch group scheduling and contact management with GoldMine.

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	A-List*	Budget Pick*
Document Manager	**Visioneer PaperPort Deluxe 5.1** **Don't let that mountain of paper get the best of you or your desk. Here's the easiest way to scan, index, file, search, retrieve, and run OCR on your documents. PaperPort Deluxe's color-coded Explorer-like folders and annotation tools are handy too.** $79. (800) 787-7007; InfoLink No. 738	**Visioneer PaperPort WebSuite** Save 30 dollars and get practically the same product, plus a slew of other software to edit, share, and post your photos on the Web. $49. (800) 787-7007; Infolink No. 739 **Verdict:** While WebSuite is a solid product, you'll miss PaperPort Deluxe's features like advanced searching, OCR, and color-coded folders.
Project Manager	**Microsoft Project 98** **Most projects don't go according to plan. Thankfully, Project 98's flexibility, usability, and Web smarts keep you on track no matter how many detours you hit. Another perk: It works well with your other Microsoft Office applications.** $469. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 740	**Primavera SureTrak Project Manager** Even the biggest projects seem easy with SureTrak, thanks to its wizards and Project KickStart feature. $399. (800) 973-1335; InfoLink No. 741 **Verdict:** If you're willing to give up some of Project 98's advanced features, SureTrak is a capable choice.
Scheduler	**Microsoft Outlook 98** **Finally! Microsoft's scheduler now works the way you do. Its Today view packs your entire schedule onto a simple Web-style page, and its printed output is better. Plus it's free for anyone—until June 30.** Free. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 742	**Microsoft Outlook 98** Get it while you can—Microsoft will start charging for it at the end of June if you're not a registered user of Office 97 or Internet Explorer 4.0. Free. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 742 **Verdict:** Don't miss out on this amazing free deal for the superior scheduler.

Reference and Entertainment CDs

Yeah, yeah, you need to know which desktop workhorse PC or complete contact manager you should pony up for. But what about the good stuff—the little stress relievers that make your long days more bearable? The choices are even tougher, as the field is teeming with new reference, entertainment, and game CDs as well as Web-based alternatives.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Behind the Times** Unlike with business apps, you don't lose a competitive advantage by going with older wares. Get last season's top-selling CDs for half price or less in the bargain bin at your superstore.
- **More Mileage** Get longer life out of your favorite games—especially action CDs like Quake—by discovering the huge cache of add-on levels available for free on the Internet. Start your search at GameSpot (www.gamespot.com).

	A-List*	Budget Pick*
Business Reference	**Rand McNally Business Traveler's Suite** **The best way, short of a private jet, to get from city to city. Business Traveler's Suite includes an excellent pair of travel companions: StreetFinder gives you street-level directions, while TripMaker maps out your entire journey.** $59. (800) 671-5006; InfoLink No. 744	**Maps on Us** The Maps on Us Web site gives you beautifully detailed maps from point A to point B, complete with written directions. Free. www.mapsonus.com; InfoLink No. 745 **Verdict:** Business Traveler's Suite is a salesperson's best friend. But if you travel only occasionally, Maps on Us does the job nicely.

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"Where'd you get that?"
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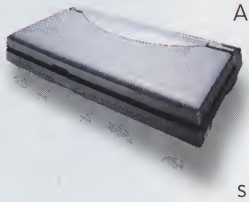

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Home Reference	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	TravRoute Door-to-Door CoPilot **Don't get lost on your next vacation. Here's a GPS package for your notebook that you can talk to—and it talks back. Ask it where you are, where to turn next, and more. Missed an exit? CoPilot replots your route. Get dead-on, point-to-point directions in a snap.** $299. (888) 872-8768; InfoLink No. 746	**Maps on Us** The best and cheapest alternative to Door-to-Door CoPilot is Maps on Us. Unlike CoPilot, it doesn't talk, but how could you hear it over the kids fighting in the backseat anyway? Free. www.mapsonus.com; InfoLink No. 745 **Verdict:** CoPilot is a smart investment, but Maps on Us is a great alternative for the cash-strapped.
Entertainment		
	Red Orb Entertainment **Riven: The Sequel to Myst** **The sequel to Myst is even better than the original for pulling you into its strange, beautiful world. Plan on losing plenty of nights and weekends to this stunning—and nonviolent—masterpiece.** $50. (800) 474-0485; InfoLink No. 747	**Activision Classic Text Adventure Masterpieces** Rediscover the past with 30 classic adventure games. OK, there are no graphics, but using text builds the imagination. $17. (800) 477-3650; InfoLink No. 748 **Verdict:** Don't miss Riven. Still, the Masterpieces are fun for adventure lovers.

Graphics Software

Creating business graphics in-house instead of farming them out to design professionals can be a huge money saver—and earner. And an artist's touch can make documents and presentations stand out in a desktop pile of papers.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Don't Go Overboard** Thousands of dollars for an entire suite of professional tools is too much if you're just touching up a pixel or two. If your needs are modest, invest in a consumer-level program.
- **Package Deal** Most printers, scanners, and cameras come with bundled software. Look for bundles aimed at business users, not families or gamers.

Presentation Graphics	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	Microsoft PowerPoint 97 **Get your point across, whether you're face to face or on the Web. If you can click a mouse, you're well on your way to creating presentations that incorporate multimedia and link smoothly to other Office documents. It doesn't get any easier than this.** $339. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 749	**SPC ActivePresenter** Turn your ideas into jazzy-looking presentations faster than you can say, "Close the deal." $50. (800) 557-3743; InfoLink No. 750 **Verdict:** If you are an Office user, stick with PowerPoint 97. But you can't beat ActivePresenter for quick-and-dirty Internet presentations.
Personal Desktop Publisher		
	Microsoft Publisher 98 **Create documents so slick you'd swear they were designed by a pro. Publisher's up-to-date art elements, wizards and premade style sets, and one-click design changes let you create your own look without breaking a sweat.** $99. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 751	**Broderbund The Print Shop PressWriter** It's half the price of Publisher, yet the Print Shop PressWriter still gives you plenty of tasteful templates, graphics, and fonts. $40. (800) 521-6263; InfoLink No. 752 **Verdict:** If you're short on cash, the Print Shop PressWriter does the job. If you're serious about doing it yourself, get the full-featured Publisher.
Professional Desktop Publisher		
	Adobe PageMaker 6.5 **If you really mean business when it comes to your newsletters and other publications, give them the professional touch with PageMaker. When you're done, a single click is all it takes to convert your creations to HTML.** $550. (800) 422-3623; InfoLink No. 753	**Adobe PageMaker 6.5** A budget professional publisher? No such animal. When it comes to pricing, PageMaker is at the low end of the scale. $550. (800) 422-3623; InfoLink No. 753 **Verdict:** Serious work demands PageMaker. If you're just interested in dabbling, stick with a personal desktop publishing program.

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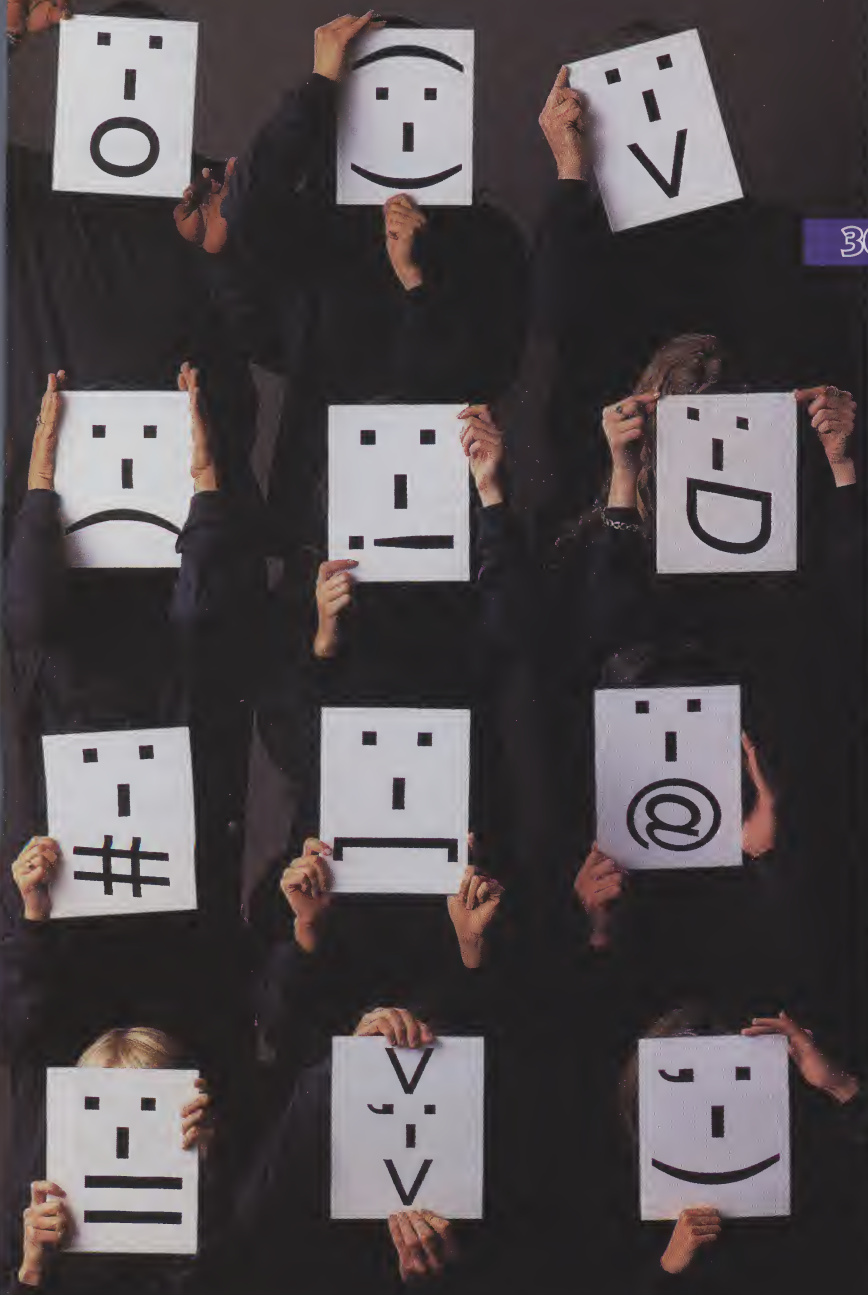

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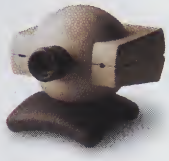

connect as local calls via your Internet provider, they'll even save you money. (Then again, priced from just $199, our whole Bigpicture family of PC video phones and TV phones does that.)

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A-List: Software

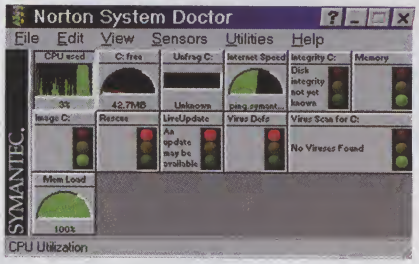
Business Graphics	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	CorelDraw 8 **No other graphics suite does as much on such a tight budget. Whether you're a professional artist or you just like to sketch, CorelDraw gets the job done with everything from drawing software to image editing to adding 3-D effects.** $495. (800) 772-6375; InfoLink No. 754	**Micrografx Graphics Suite 2** If CorelDraw 8's price tag is too rich for your blood, look to Graphics Suite 2. It's another capable, slightly cheaper all-in-one toolkit. $350. (800) 733-3729; InfoLink No. 755 **Verdict:** If you can spare the extra $145, step up to CorelDraw's mind-boggling collection of tools. If not, Graphics Suite does the job.
Personal Photo Editor		
	Microsoft Picture It 2.0 **Spruce up those old photos and new digital ones with some surprisingly sophisticated image tools and fun projects. When you're done perfecting your pics, post your images on the Web or send them off to Kodak and get prints back in the mail.** $50. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 756	**Microsoft Picture It 2.0** At $50, Picture It is impossible to top. It's got all the touch-up tools you need for personal jobs, at a price that fits into most budgets. $50. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 756 **Verdict:** Picture It has everything you need for making the most of your photos. Still not enough? Go with Adobe Photoshop.
Professional Photo Editor		
	Adobe Photoshop 5.0 **The ultimate digital darkroom is back for round five. This new version gets down to business with multiple levels of undo and more exacting color-management tools. Plus you get all the professional tools and filters that made Photoshop famous.** $699. (800) 492-3623; InfoLink No. 757	**Jasc Software Paint Shop Pro 5.0** More than a personal editor and less than a full-blown professional tool, Paint Shop Pro gets your images ready for prime time. $79. (800) 622-2793; InfoLink No. 758 **Verdict:** Unless you're doing professional work, Paint Shop Pro is enough to get you through most image editing tasks.
Illustration Software		
	Adobe Illustrator 7.0 **For sophisticated computer drawing and prepress tasks, there is no substitute. Illustrator integrates flawlessly with other Adobe applications like Photoshop and PageMaker, and works cross-platform with its Macintosh counterpart.** $349. (800) 649-3875; InfoLink No. 759	**MetaCreations Expression 1.0** Create dazzling images—even animation—in one sweep with Expression's Skeletal Strokes. Offers full support for pressure-sensitive pen tablets. $149. (800) 846-0111; InfoLink No. 773 **Verdict:** Illustrator is king, but if you want to save some cash—and still create gorgeous images—Expression is a compromise you won't regret.

Tools and Utilities

Swat! With all the bugs that riddle your essential apps, a full arsenal of repellants is a must. Besides zapping viruses, utilities make up for outright software inadequacies. With a crowded field of contenders it's easy to find an inexpensive alternative.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **The Total Package** Software is like a hotel room—it's always better to have a suite. Get a full-fledged antivirus package, disk manager, and system watchdog for about the price of a single app.
- **Pay for It** Some of the best virus utilities are shareware, but there's a reason to buy them outright. If you register, you'll be informed of frequent updates.



Windows 95 System Utilities	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	Symantec Norton Utilities 3.0 for Windows 95 **This veteran utility is still the most trusted suite—and it packs a host of new features. Its Disk Doctor is always on call, checking for and fixing drive problems, and CrashGuard keeps your system up and running.** $79. (800) 441-7234. InfoLink No. 760	**Network Associates Nuts & Bolts Deluxe** Deep-clean your system with Nuts & Bolts Deluxe—and keep viruses at bay with VirusScan. $59. (408) 988-3832. InfoLink No. 761 **Verdict:** Nuts & Bolts offers more utilities for less cash—great for tight budgets. But larger offices should invest in Norton Utilities for Windows 95.

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A-List: Software

	A-List*	Budget Pick*
Windows NT System Utilities	**Symantec Norton Utilities 2.0 for Windows NT** **If your network servers are down, your employees may as well take a day off. Keep your hardware in check using the premier set of system utilities for Windows NT. You know they'll work too.** $99. (800) 441-7234; InfoLink No. 762	**Symantec Norton Utilities 2.0 for Windows NT** Yeah, there are products that perform one or two of the tasks that Norton handles. But nothing else comes close to this total package. $99. (800) 441-7234; InfoLink No. 762 **Verdict:** Stop wasting time with NT's anemic built-in toolkit—Norton does it all.
Antivirus Software	**Quarterdeck ViruSweep** **Inoculate your PC with ViruSweep and it will repay you with hours of hassle-free computing. Get the best in virus protection for new and undiscovered viruses. Don't forget online updates from the Quarterdeck Anti-Virus Research Center.** $40. (800) 354-3222; InfoLink No. 763	**Microsoft Office 97, Service Release 1** Download this patch and use its built-in antivirus setting. You'll find it at www.microsoft.com/office. Free for Office 97 users. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 764 **Verdict:** Office users, download Service Release 1 for free. But shell out $40 for ViruSweep, and you'll be even better protected.
OCR Software	**Caere OmniPage Pro 8.0** **Fast. Easy. Smart. OmniPage Pro is all three. It's got the fastest and most accurate OCR engine—plus an intuitive interface and the ability to work within Microsoft Word. You'll never have to retype again.** $499, $129 upgrade from any OCR package. (800) 736-5735; InfoLink No. 765	**ScanSoft TextBridge Pro 98** Excellent accuracy at a fraction of the price of OmniPagePro, plus it's better at retaining a document's original layout. $79. (800) 432-9329; InfoLink No. 766 **Verdict:** If accuracy and Microsoft Word integration matter most, choose OmniPage Pro. But for basic OCR, TextBridge Pro does the job.
File Utility	**Inso Quick View Plus 4.5** **Seeing isn't just believing, it's also pretty handy in a pinch. Don't have the app a file was created with? No problem. View the file—then copy and print it—with Quick View Plus. You'll always be covered—it supports over 200 file formats.** $49. (800) 733-5799; InfoLink No. 767	**WinCorner FmView 2.0** Sure, it supports less than half the file formats that Quick View Plus does (80 to be exact). But FmView is shareware, so you'll save a few bucks. $15. www.wincorner.com; InfoLink No. 768 **Verdict:** If you've got 49 bucks to spare, spend them on Quick View Plus. Otherwise, FmView can get you out of most viewing jams.
Remote-Control Software	**Traveling Software LapLink 7.5 for Windows 95** **Keep your notebook and desktop computers in step. At the office, flawlessly sync files using cable or infrared connections. On the road, dial up your desktop to safely access or transfer files.** $150. (800) 343-8080; InfoLink No. 769	**Symantec pcAnywhere32 8.0** No savings here, but pcAnywhere32 is close on the heels of LapLink. It lets you remotely control your machine, no matter what your OS. $150. (800) 441-7234; InfoLink No. 770 **Verdict:** LapLink's setup wizard and two-way, simultaneous file-transfer feature put it a half-step ahead of pcAnywhere32.
Application Development Tool	**Microsoft Visual Basic 5.0 Professional Edition** **Visual Basic has always been good, but now it's downright fantastic. It approaches the development power of C++, but it's easier to use, thanks to tools like the Application Wizard.** $499. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 771	**Microsoft Office 97** You may not realize it, but if you own Office 97, you also own a version of Visual Basic for Applications. Included with Office 97. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 772 **Verdict:** If you're serious about Visual Basic, you need VB 5.0 Professional Edition. If you're like the rest of us, the freebie alternative is a gold mine.

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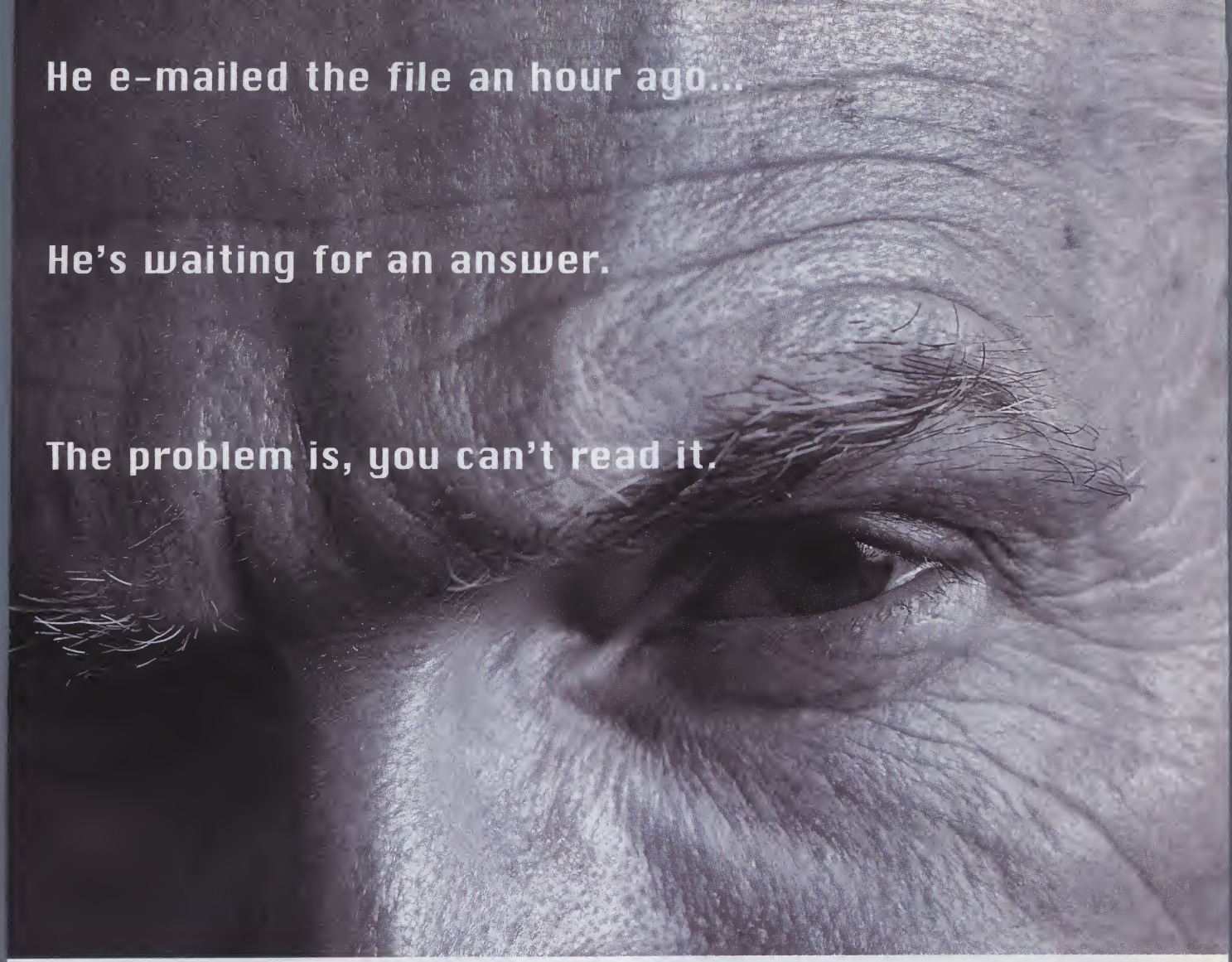

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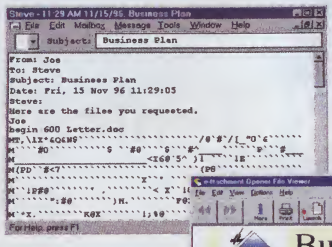

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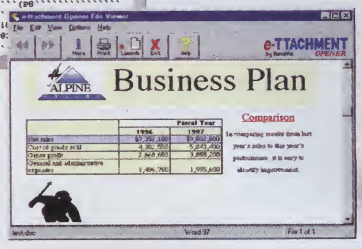

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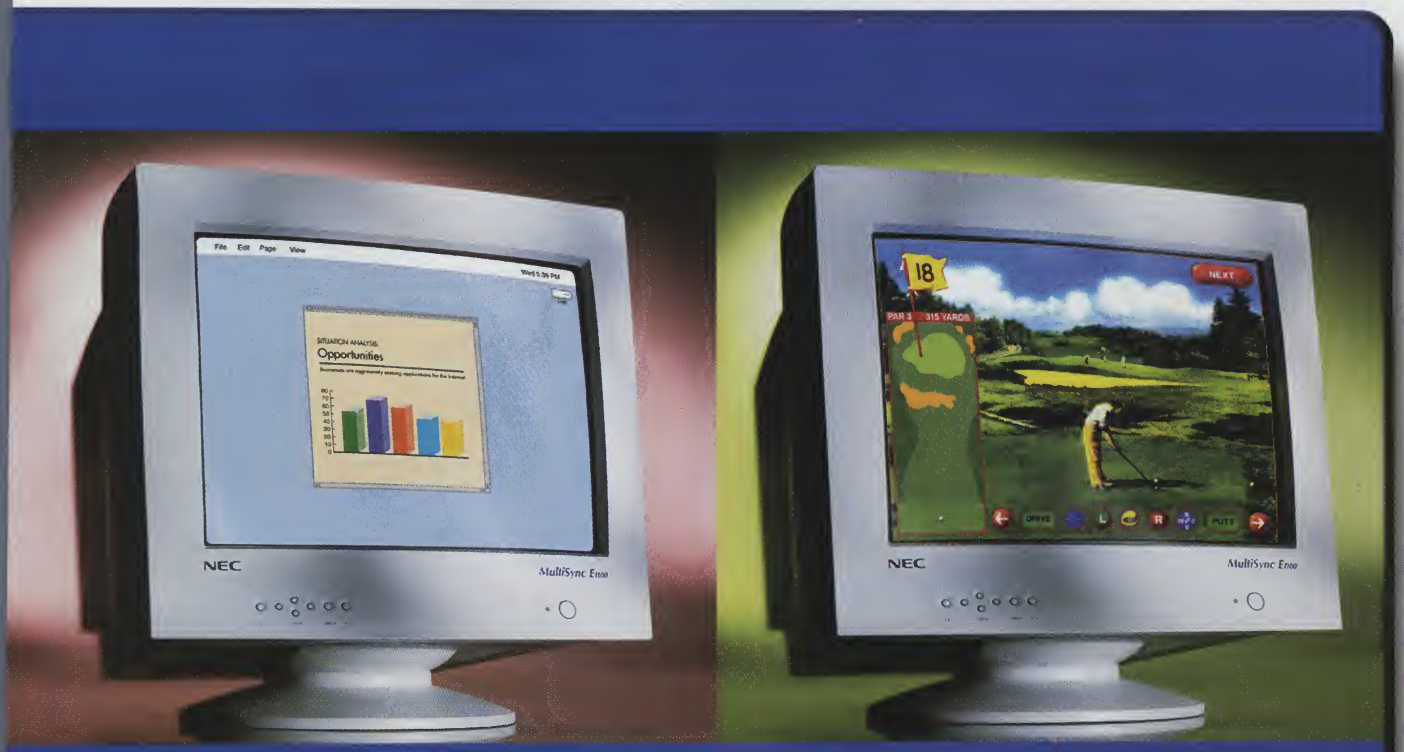

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A-List: Internet

Street preachers in Manhattan attract bigger throngs of devotees than most Web sites. Getting your message heard—and finding the information you need—require a special brew of cybertools. The technologies are young. But already some standout winners have emerged.

Anything that helps rev up surfing the Net should be tops for your toolbox. Net.Medic from VitalSigns Software sleuths out the speed bumps in your connection. Wired Digital's HotBot is the fastest search engine out there. And PeakJet, part of the PeakSoft NetMagnet suite, loads Web pages before you click on a link.

These are good starting places for boosting Web performance, but efficiency is as important as raw speed. Forté's Agent 1.5 is the best newsgroup reader for ferreting out trash on the fly. Microsoft's Outlook Express manages e-mail better than anything you'll find—plus it's free. And no ISP does it better than UUNet Technologies.

Now that you've streamlined the process, how can the Web save you time? More to the point, how can it make you more productive? Microsoft's NetMeeting 2.1 videoconferencing package can save you a fortune in travel bills. And FaxSav's Internet Suite of Services charges you a mere $1.29 per page to fax to Jakarta or Harare, and only 15 cents per page to fax anywhere in the United States.

Your company's bottom line is one thing. Now how about boosting your own? Begin with an online subscription to the *Wall Street Journal,* which gives you all the contents of the paper edition for less than half the cost, along with real-time stock quotes and portfolio management. Then fire your broker. E*Trade costs a flat $14.95 per trade and cuts the small talk.

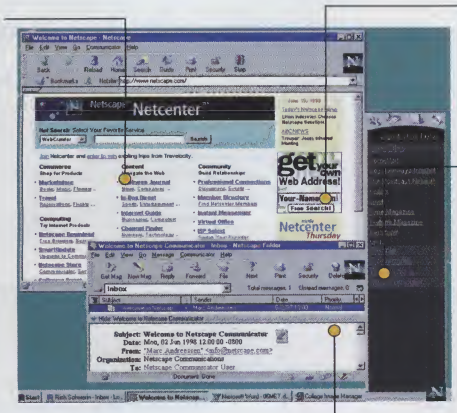
Of course, retrieving information from the Internet is only half the story. Posting and maintaining your own Web site keeps getting easier. With the help of clever wizards in Microsoft's FrontPage 98, you don't even need to know what HTML stands for. Macromedia's Flash 2 lets you build highly compact interactive animations on your site. And Symantec's Visual Café for Java 2.5 delivers the ultimate in control over how you build your Web site.

To keep visitors returning, you've got to keep your content fresh. For site management, Tetranet's Linkbot 3.5 keeps your aspirin bill down and your time free. By the way, you'll want to make sure your Web server's got plenty of get up and go. None is faster than Microsoft's Internet Information Server 4.0.

WHAT YOU GIVE UP

There's no single way to do anything on the Internet, including shopping for Web tools and services. It's easy to go the budget route without sacrificing too much.

Stripped-Down: Know what you're giving up with free but limited utilities. Case in point: Forté's Free Agent newsreader lacks advanced filtering.



Not Friendly: Inexpensive products often skimp on usability—watch out for clunky interfaces, confusing processes, and limited guides.

Slow Lane: You're not the only one seduced by bargain ISPs. All those takers mean plenty of traffic and overloaded resources—remember America Online's perennial busy signals last year?

One and Only: Bare-bones products often bypass extras in favor of performing a single task. In the long run, a software suite might be a better investment.

Web Browsers and Utilities

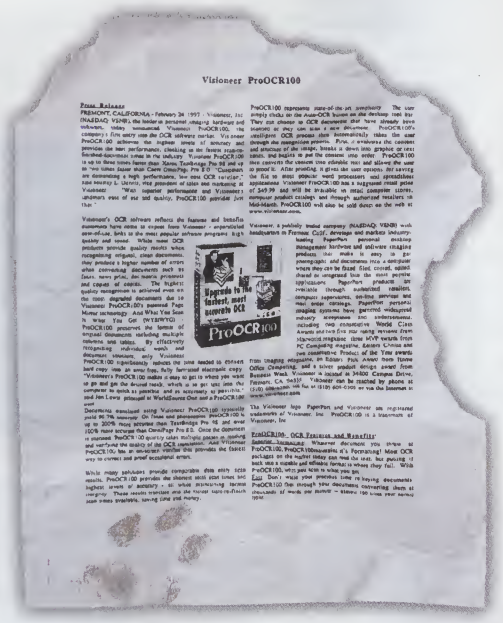
Netscape had the first—and for a while the best—commercial Web browser, but Microsoft launched the price war by offering its browser free from the start. Now both browsers are free, and many other Web utility makers are following suit and slashing prices. Most already offer free trial editions you can download too.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Less Is More** Don't waste time or bandwidth downloading and installing every Web plug-in or utility that comes along. Both Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 and Netscape Communicator 4.0 integrate many features into their Web browsers—like Java and conferencing utilities—that used to require separate plug-ins or applets.
- **Free but Not Equal** Free Internet utilities can't always match the features of their commercial counterparts. But that doesn't mean you always have to pay for the power. Look for freeware versions of top software—such as Forté's Free Agent newsreader, a worthy product in its own right—that give you a scaled-down version of a full-featured application.

Web Browser	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 **Browsing made easy—thanks to the Explorer bar and offline tools—plus smooth-as-silk desktop integration and brawny publishing tools make IE4 No.1. It also includes Outlook Express, an e-mail manager with smart filters.** Free. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 781	**Netscape Communicator 4.0** Its new price—free—makes choosing a browser tougher. With Communicator you avoid some Windows crashes and software conflicts. Free. (800) 638-7483; InfoLink No. 782 **Verdict:** IE4's on top thanks to an ultraslick browser and generous extras. But Communicator is just as easy to use.
Internet Utility		
	VitalSigns Software Net.Medic **Stop wondering why the Web's so slow. Net.Medic tracks your ISP's server traffic, your PC's Internet setup, and more. It also monitors your connection speed and online time. If only Net.Medic could fix the problems too.** $49. (888) 984-8259; InfoLink No. 783	**Kookaburra Software 'Net Pal 1.1** Want a 56Kbps Internet connection—no exceptions? Let 'Net Pal track your dial-up speed and redial until you reach the desired rate. $19. www.kburra.com; InfoLink No. 784 **Verdict:** You'll like Net.Medic's interface better than 'Net Pal's. But you can download 'Net Pal for free and keep it for less than your monthly ISP bill.
Newsgroup Reader		
	Forté Agent 1.5 **Tap into the buried treasure of Usenet newsgroups. Agent 1.5 filters, scans, files, and purges messages automatically. It saves you even more time by recognizing when the same messages are posted twice—and dumping the extras.** $29. www.forteinc.com; InfoLink No. 785	**Forté Free Agent** Casual newsgroup users can still get much of Agent's ease of use in this freeware version. Free. www.forteinc.com; InfoLink No. 786 **Verdict:** To get in and out of newsgroups fast look to Free Agent, the free version of Agent. But hard-core newsgroup users can't survive without the full power of Forté Agent.
Security/Encryption		
	Network Associates PGP for Personal Privacy 5.5 **What's in your e-mail? It's none of our business—and you can keep it that way with this easy-to-use encryption app. Generate private and public keys in seconds. Plus smooth integration with Qualcomm Eudora Pro.** $39. (408) 988-3832; InfoLink No. 787	**Symantec Norton Secret Stuff 1.0** It's not fancy, but it gets the job done. Encrypt and password-protect all your e-mail. Download Secret Stuff at www.symantec.com/trialware. Free. (800) 441-7234; InfoLink No. 788 **Verdict:** The bare-bones Secret Stuff keeps out most prying eyes. For total security, get PGP for Personal Privacy.

*NOTE: PRICES ARE ESTIMATED STREET UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE. FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO WWW.PCCOMPUTING.COM/INFOLINK.


Visioneer ProOCR100

Press Release

FREMONT, CALIFORNIA - February 24, 1997 - Visioneer, Inc (NASDAQ: VSNR), the leader in personal imaging hardware and software, today announced Visioneer ProOCR100, the company's first entry into the OCR software market. Visioneer ProOCR100 achieves the highest levels of accuracy and provides the best performance, clocking in the fastest out-of-the-finished-document times in the industry. Visioneer ProOCR100 is up to three times faster than Xerox TextBridge Pro 98 and up to two times faster than Caere OmniPage Pro 8.0. "Customers are demanding a high performance, low cost OCR solution," said Murray L. Dennis, vice president of sales and marketing at Visioneer. "With superior performance and Visioneer's trademark ease of use and quality, ProOCR100 provides just that."

Visioneer's OCR software reflects the features and benefits customers have come to expect from Visioneer - unparalleled ease-of-use, links to the most popular software programs, high quality and speed. While most OCR products provide quality results when recognizing original, clean documents, they produce a higher number of errors when converting documents such as faxes, news print, dot-matrix printouts and copies of copies. The highest quality recognition is achieved even on the most degraded documents due to Visioneer ProOCR100's patented Page Mirror technology. And What You Scan Is What You Get (WYSIWYG) ProOCR100 preserves the format of original documents, including multiple columns and tables. By effectively recognizing individual words and document structure, only Visioneer ProOCR100 significantly reduces the time needed to convert hard copy into an error-free, fully formatted electronic copy. "Visioneer's ProOCR100 makes it easy to get to where you want to go and get the desired result, which is to get text into the computer as quick as possible and as accurately as possible," said Jon Lewis, principal at WorldSource One and a ProOCR100 user.

Documents translated using Visioneer ProOCR100 typically yield 99.7% accuracy On faxes and photocopies, ProOCR100 is up to 200% more accurate than TextBridge Pro 98 and over 100% more accurate than OmniPage Pro 8.0. Once the document is scanned, ProOCR100 quickly takes multiple passes at reading and verifying the quality of the OCR translation. And Visioneer ProOCR100 has an on-screen verifier that provides the fastest way to correct and proof occasional errors.

While many solutions provide comparable data entry scan results, ProOCR100 provides the shortest total scan times and highest levels of accuracy - all while maintaining format integrity. These results translate into the fastest start-to-finish scan times available, saving time and money.

ProOCR100 represents state-of-the-art simplicity. The user simply clicks on the Auto-OCR button on the desktop tool bar. They can choose to OCR documents that have already been scanned or they can scan a new document. ProOCR100's intelligent OCR process then automatically takes the user through the recognition process. First, it evaluates the content and structure of the image, breaks it down into graphic or text zones, and begins to put the content into order. ProOCR100 then contains the content into editable text and allows the user to proof it. After proofing, it gives the user options for saving the file to most popular word processors and spreadsheet applications. Visioneer ProOCR100 has a suggested retail price of $49.99 and will be available in retail computer stores, computer product catalogs and through authorized resellers in Mid-March. ProOCR100 will also be sold direct on the web at www.visioneer.com.

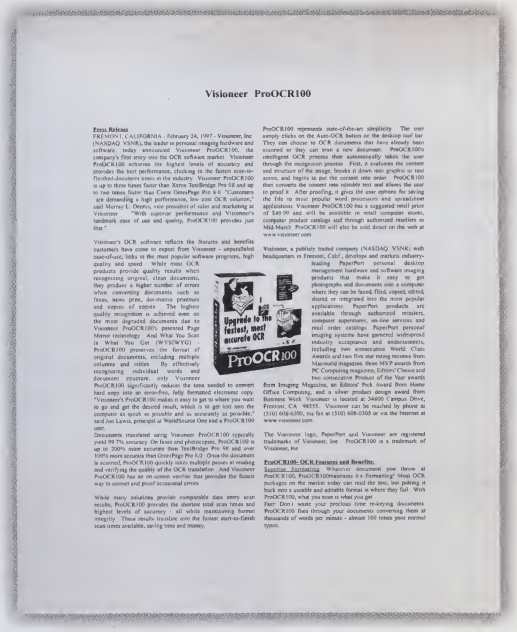
Visioneer, a publicly traded company (NASDAQ: VSNR) with headquarters in Fremont, Calif., develops and markets industry-leading PaperPort personal desktop management hardware and software imaging products that make it easy to get photographs and documents into a computer where they can be faxed, filed, copied, edited, shared or integrated into the most popular applications. PaperPort products are available through authorized retailers, computer superstores, on-line services and mail order catalogs. PaperPort personal imaging systems have garnered widespread industry acceptance and endorsements, including two consecutive World Class Awards and two five star rating reviews from Macworld magazine, three MVP awards from PC Computing magazine, Editors' Choice and two consecutive Product of the Year awards from Imaging Magazine, an Editors' Pick Award from Home Office Computing, and a silver product design award from Business Week. Visioneer is located at 34800 Campus Drive, Fremont, CA 94555. Visioneer can be reached by phone at (510) 608-6300, via fax at (510) 608-6305 or via the Internet at www.visioneer.com.

The Visioneer logo, PaperPort and Visioneer are registered trademarks of Visioneer, Inc. ProOCR100 is a trademark of Visioneer, Inc.

ProOCR100- OCR Features and Benefits:

Superior Formatting Wherever documents you throw at ProOCR100, ProOCR100maintains it's Formatting! Most OCR packages on the market today can read the text, but pasting it back into a useable and editable format is where they fail. With ProOCR100, what you scan is what you get.

Fast- Don't waste your precious time re-keying documents. ProOCR100 flies through your documents converting them at thousands of words per minute - almost 100 times your normal typist.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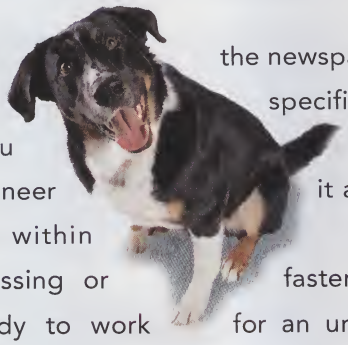
Fast- Don't waste your precious time re-keying documents. ProOCR100 flies through your documents converting them at thousands of words per minute - almost 100 times your normal typist.

Visioneer ProOCR100 handles even the most degraded documents up to 200% faster.

No matter how dog-eared your document has gotten from fax machines or just plain life itself, you can bring it back to life with Visioneer Pro**OCR**100. Just scan it and within seconds you have a word processing or spreadsheet document that's ready to work with. Read, edit, drop into a table, print, or just save it on your PC. No wait. No work. No retyping of documents.



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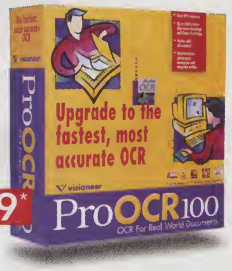

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Product	Retail Price*	Speed** (in seconds)	99% Accuracy†	OCR Wizard	HTML Output	Fax Support	WYSIWYG Editor
Visioneer ProOCR100	**$49.99**	22	X	X	X	X	X
Xerox TextBridge®Pro	$79.99	52	X	X	X	X	X
Caere OmniPage®Pro	$129.99	32	X	X	X	X	X

From the makers of award-winning PaperPort® scanners and software.

* As of March 1, 1998.
** OCR times based on Visioneer's internal testing.
† On laser quality output documents.

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Competitive information. Hot new markets. Trade secrets. There's never been a better time to use the Internet to your advantage. New online service plans, like $19.95-a-month, flat-rate packages, were unheard of just a short time ago.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

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- **Learn the Lingo** Save time and money by mastering the search techniques your favorite sites use. Look for a FAQ or help file on searches at the site.
- **Faster Is Better** When shopping for an ISP, make sure it has V.90 support for guaranteed 56Kbps access.

Search Engine	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	Wired Digital HotBot **The fastest, most accurate Web search engine is yours to use free of charge. HotBot is also the easiest search engine out there, with drop-down menu items for advanced searching. Whatever you're looking for, you'll find it here.** Free. www.hotbot.com; InfoLink No. 789	**Excite** A close second to HotBot and also free. Not sure where to start looking? Let Excite's easy-to-navigate categories point you in the right direction. Free. www.excite.com; InfoLink No. 816 **Verdict:** Looking for an exact term? Start with HotBot. For more general searches, go with Excite.
Web Accelerator		
	PeakSoft NetMagnet **Think of it as your tireless Web companion. The best part of this complete Web suite is PeakJet, an intelligent tool that anticipates where you'll go next and preloads the sites. Plus you'll love its handy utilities for finding and sharing Web pages.** $55. (888) 377-7325; InfoLink No. 790	**Kiss Software Speed Surfer 3.2** Save $50 and still boost your connection with a utility that loads Web pages before you ask for them. Don't expect any extras, though. $29. (888) 768-5477; InfoLink No. 791 **Verdict:** Get Speed Surfer to simply boost your Internet connection, but if you want more options, go with NetMagnet.
National Online Service		
	America Online **Joke all you want. AOL is still the world's most popular online service. Its huge selection of specialized forums and content offers something for everyone.** $9.95 per month for unlimited AOL access; $21.95 per month for unlimited Internet access. (800) 827-6364; InfoLink No. 792	**MSN Premier** Not many ISPs can match MSN's low yearly rates. Plus you get special content you won't find anywhere else. $19.95 per month unlimited access, $69.95 for an entire year. (800) 386-5550; InfoLink No. 793 **Verdict:** Stick with America Online unless you need MSN's custom content.
National ISP		
	UUNet Technologies **No matter what size your business, UUNet can handle the job. This Internet service provider has the most connection options nationwide; fast, reliable bandwidth; and extra services like Web site hosting and faxing.** $30 per month for 25 hours; Web hosting starts at $300 per month. (800) 488-6384; InfoLink No. 794	**Concentric Network** Monthly access for the price of lunch. With Concentric's starter plan it's possible. Plus you can take a break with its free game service. $7.95 per month for 5 hours, $19.95 for unlimited access. (800) 939-4262; InfoLink No. 795 **Verdict:** Businesses should go with UUNet; for a home connection, save money with Concentric.
News Service		
	Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition **Reading the newsprint edition of the *Journal* simply isn't enough. Go online for breaking business news, real-time stock quotes, and portfolio tracking. Try a free, two-week trial membership at www.wsj.com.** $49 per year, $29 per year for *Wall Street Journal* subscribers. www.wsj.com; InfoLink No. 796	**Quicken.com** You won't spend a dime for its investment, budget, and loan resources. Its business news, stock quotes, and discussions are also free. Free. www.quicken.com; InfoLink No. 797 **Verdict:** For serious business resources, only WSJ will do. But if you're more interested in personal finance, opt for Quicken.com.

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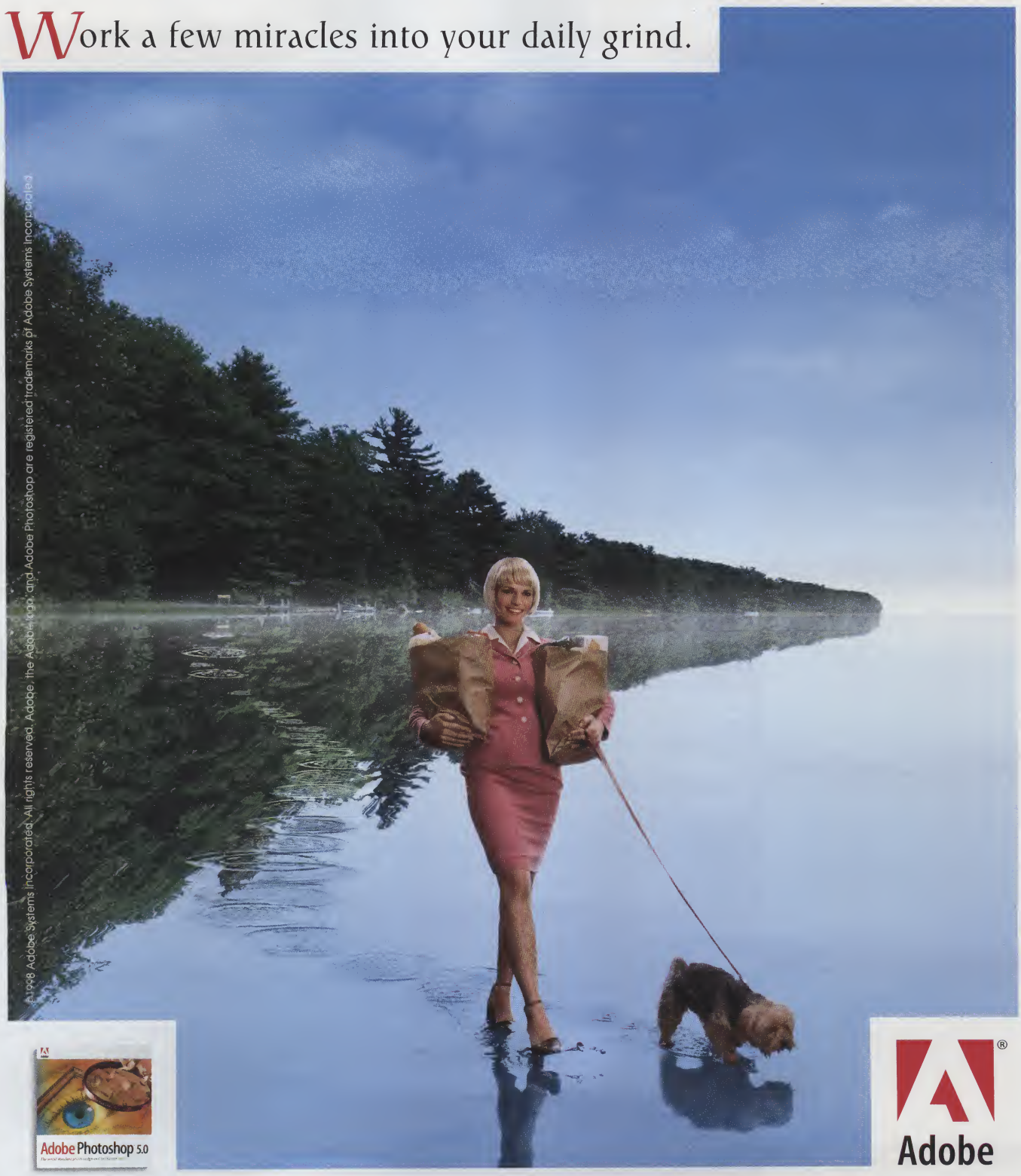

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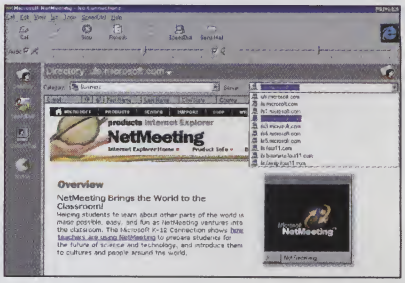
Web Communications

If you're not taking advantage of Internet mail, phone calls, faxing, and videoconferencing, you're missing out on big savings. The best apps have always been free, but now they're grown up—packed with all the features and standards support businesses demand.

MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Current Events** Many of the best Web-conferencing apps come bundled with your browser, modem, or videoconferencing kit. Before installing these included programs, check the software manufacturer's Web site for updated versions.
- **Time Is Money** Cut faxing chores down to size by taking advantage of batch-faxing capabilities. You can send the same fax to hundreds of people at once.



Internet E-mail	A-List*	Budget Pick*
	Microsoft Outlook Express **You've got the browser—now discover its secret weapon. Internet Explorer 4.0 hosts the best e-mail manager bar none. It's got an intuitive three-pane interface, a slick address book, and a slew of other advanced features you'll wonder how you lived without.** Free. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 800	**Microsoft Outlook Express** Did we mention that the only way to get your hands on Outlook Express is to upgrade to the gratis Internet Explorer 4.0? Free. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 800 **Verdict:** You can't lose—get absolute control over your e-mail without spending a penny with Outlook Express.
Internet Phone		
	Microsoft NetMeeting 2.1 **Outlook Express isn't the only thing worth discovering in Internet Explorer. Make free phone calls, collaborate on documents, even scribble your ideas out on a virtual whiteboard with this free communicator that's also part of IE4.** Free. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 801	**Microsoft NetMeeting 2.1** Why stop there? If you use Office 97, don't miss the special add-ons for using NetMeeting with the popular business suite. Find them at www.microsoft.com/netmeeting. Free. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 801 **Verdict:** For Internet calls and collaboration, the clear choice is NetMeeting.
Internet Fax		
	FaxSav Internet Suite of Services **It's better than having your own fax machine: With a FaxSav account, send hundreds of faxes at once—for pennies a page. And with its new Faxcourier service, you can receive faxes right in your e-mail box.** Free software; 15 cents per page for domestic faxes. (800) 828-7115; InfoLink No. 802	**FaxSav Internet Suite of Services** Out of the office, FaxSav will save you even more money. Skip the hefty hotel fax charges and send faxes with a copy of FaxSav on your notebook. Free software; 15 cents per page for domestic faxes. (800) 828-7115; InfoLink No. 802 **Verdict:** Dump the fax machine for the Internet and save a bundle with FaxSav.
Internet Videoconferencing		
	White Pine Software CU-SeeMe 3.1 **Now you can be two places at once. The newest version of the venerable CU-SeeMe brings standards support and better quality. And for multipoint videoconferencing it's the only way to go.** $79; $69 download at www.cuseeme.com. (800) 241-7463; InfoLink No. 803	**Microsoft NetMeeting 2.1** This Microsoft freebie is more than an Internet phone; simply add a video camera for Web videoconferencing. Of course, you'll have to run Internet Explorer to use it. Free. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 801 **Verdict:** If you use IE4, go with NetMeeting and save some money. Netscape users, try CU-SeeMe.

*NOTE: PRICES ARE ESTIMATED STREET UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE. FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO WWW.PCCOMPUTING.COM/INFOLINK.

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And both are available with our exclusive 48-hour Express Exchange℠ Service option. The space saving monitors from ViewSonic. They'll improve your short-depth perception. Again and again.

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ViewSonic PT813 *January 1998*

ViewSonic P815 ViewSonic 17GA *June 1997*

ViewSonic PT775 *July 1997* *January 1998*

ViewSonic G810 *January 1997*

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Monitor	GS771	PS790
Screen Size/ Viewable	17" (16.0" viewable)	19" (18.0" viewable)
Dot Pitch	.27	.25
Maximum Resolution	1,280 x 1,024	1,600 x 1,280
Recommended Resolution	1,024 x 768 @ 87Hz	1,600 x 1,200 @ 76Hz

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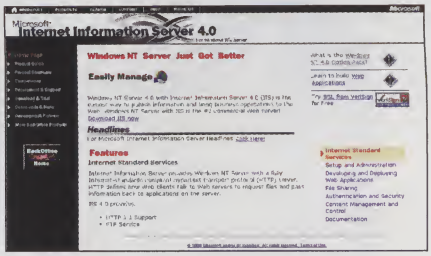
MONEY-SAVING SECRETS

- **Embrace Standards** Skip the proprietary tools. Reach a larger audience by making sure your tools and Web sites are standards-based.
- **Serve It Yourself** Before you hire an ISP to host your Web site for a hefty sum, consider the do-it-yourself approach. Web servers such as Microsoft Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition include everything you need.



	A-List*	Budget Pick*
Web Publisher	**Microsoft FrontPage 98** **Anyone can create a Web site with FrontPage 98's hand-holding wizards. You also get plenty of site-creation tools, Web standards support, and site-management tools.** $149. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 805	**Adobe PageMill 3.0** Here's a budget Web-page designer with excellent frame and table tools. $99. (800) 411-8657; InfoLink No. 806 **Verdict:** Spend the extra dollars on FrontPage 98—its excellent wizards will save you time.
Web Server Software	**Microsoft Internet Information Server 4.0** **If you're running Windows NT 4.0, you already have the best and fastest Web server money can buy—IIS4.** Free with Windows NT. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 807	**Microsoft Internet Information Server 4.0** Not every business runs on NT, but they'll wish they did so they could get IIS4. Free. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 807 **Verdict:** Stick with IIS4, unless you're not ready or willing to switch from Windows 95 to NT.
Site Management Utility	**Tetranet Linkbot 3.5** **Here's the best way to keep your site fresh and up-to-the-moment. Linkbot sniffs out broken links so you can concentrate on more important things—like redesigning your site.** $249. (888) 245-5550; InfoLink No. 808	**BiggByte Software InfoLink Link Checker 1.9** This little gem isn't much to look at, but it's a quick and cheap way to mend broken links. $50. www.biggbyte.com; InfoLink No. 809 **Verdict:** For all but the most basic link-checking, go with Linkbot.
Commerce Server	**Microsoft Site Server 3.0 Commerce Edition** **Everything you need to set up and maintain an online storefront—inventory management, secure transactions, and order processing.** Price not set. (800) 426-9400; InfoLink No. 810	**The Internet Factory Merchant Builder 2.2** Set up a storefront without breaking the bank. Look for the new 3.0 version with ISP hosting. $1,495; (800) 233-8335; InfoLink No. 811 **Verdict:** NT shops should invest in Site Server.
Web Animation Software	**Macromedia Flash 2** **Put this vector-based animator to work and build compact, interactive Web animations, buttons, graphics, banners, logos, maps, cartoons—you name it.** $299. (800) 945-9075; InfoLink No. 812	**Totally Hip Software WebPainter 2.0** For a lot less money, jazz up your site with this GIF creator that doesn't require a special plug-in. $70. (888) 884-3447; InfoLink No. 813 **Verdict:** For sophisticated effects, go with Flash; otherwise try WebPainter.
Java Development	**Symantec Visual Café for Java 2.5 Professional Development Edition** **This is the one that the Java jockeys swear by, thanks to a speedy JIT (just-in-time) compiler and more.** $300. (800) 453-1059; InfoLink No. 814	**NEC Systems AuraLine Multimedia Creation Kit** Skip the programming, yet still add basic Java elements to your site. $20. (888) 223-4385; InfoLink No. 815 **Verdict:** For serious Java, get Visual Café; dabblers will appreciate AuraLine's kit.

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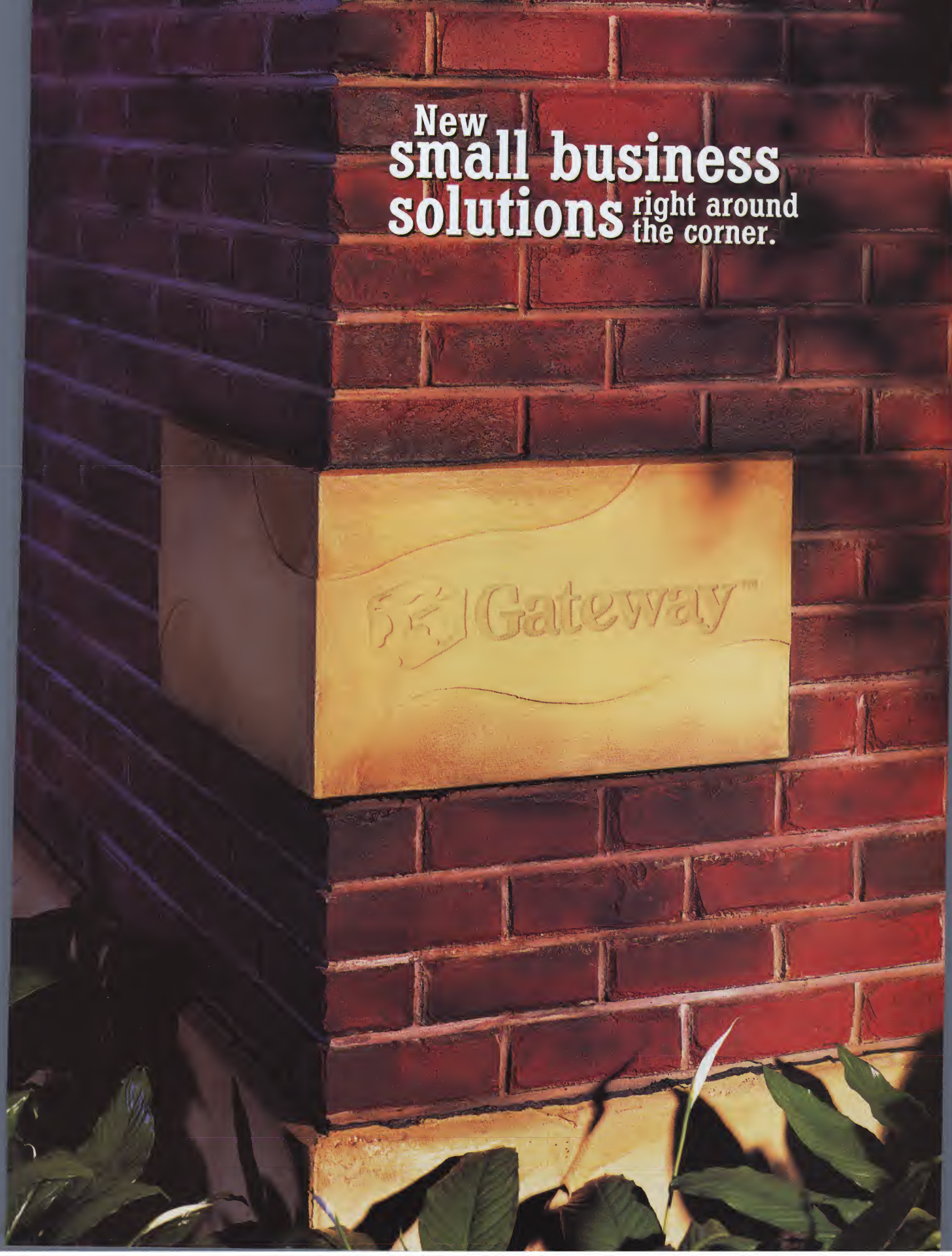
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GP6-266

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- 4MB 3-D AGP Graphics
- 4GB 11ms Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 13X min/32X max CD-ROM Drive
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- GP-Series Mid-Tower Case
- 104+ Keyboard & MS® IntelliMouse™
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- 8.4GB 8.5ms Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 13X min/32X max CD-ROM Drive
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- GP-Series Mid-Tower Case
- 104+ Keyboard & MS IntelliMouse
- MS Windows 95
- **MS Windows 98 Upgrade Offer through June 20, 1998**
- MS Office 97, Small Business Edition plus Bookshelf 98
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GP6-350

- **Intel 350MHz Pentium II Processor with 512K Cache**
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- EV700 .28 Screen Pitch 17" Monitor (15.9" viewable)
- 8MB 3-D AGP Graphics
- 10GB 8.5ms Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 13X min/32X max CD-ROM Drive
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- GP-Series Mid-Tower Case
- 104+ Keyboard & MS IntelliMouse
- **MS Windows NT 4.0**
- MS Office 97, Small Business Edition plus Bookshelf 98
- Gateway Gold Service & Support for Business Direct

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GP6-400

- **Intel 400MHz Pentium II Processor with 512K Cache**
- 128MB SDRAM
- **VX900 .26 Screen Pitch 19" Monitor (18" viewable)**
- 8MB 3-D AGP Graphics
- 10GB 8.5ms Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 13X min/32X max CD-ROM Drive
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- GP-Series Mid-Tower Case
- 104+ Keyboard & MS IntelliMouse
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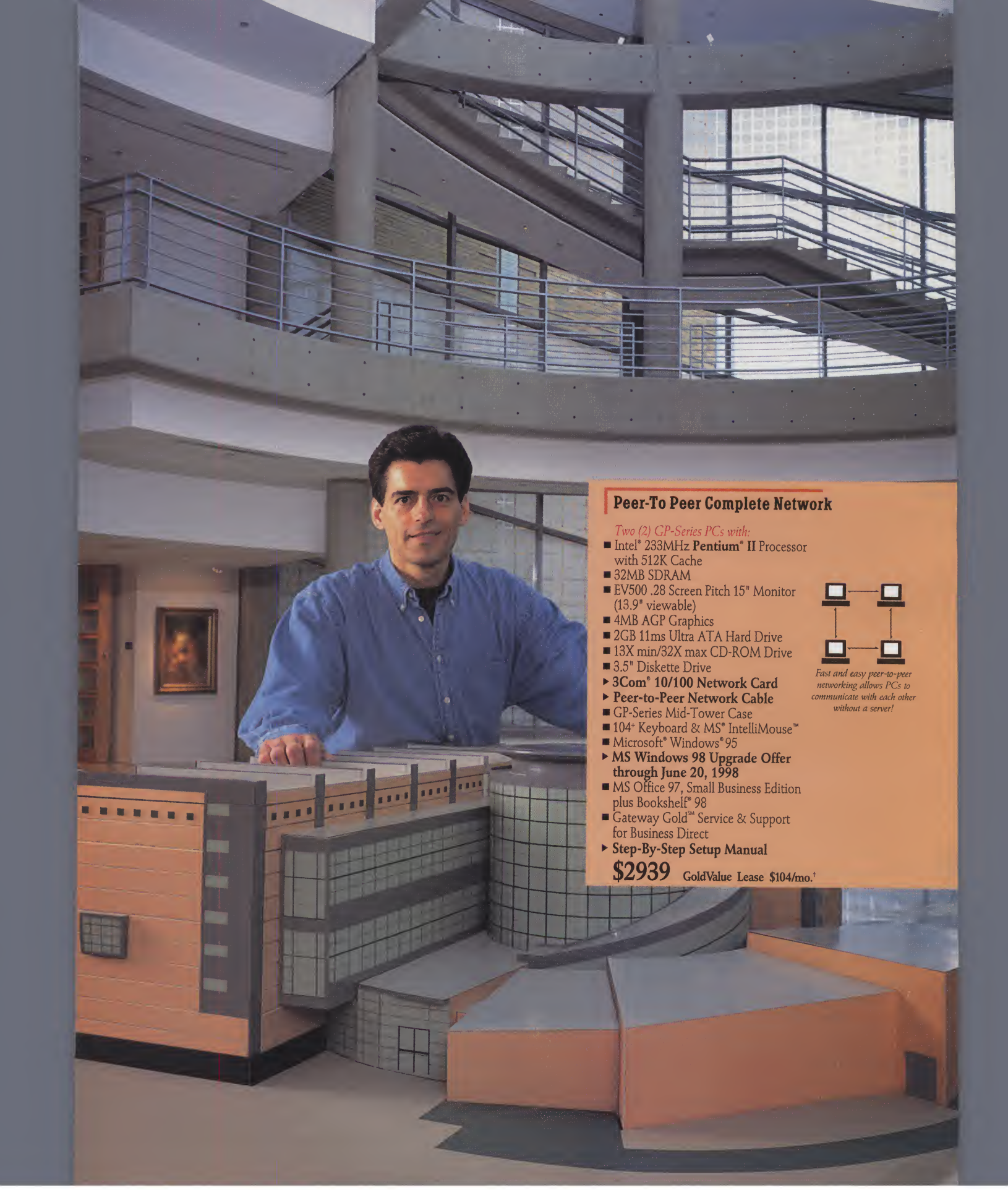

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- 2GB 11ms Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- 13X min/32X max CD-ROM Drive
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- **3Com® 10/100 Network Card**
- **Peer-to-Peer Network Cable**
- GP-Series Mid-Tower Case
- 104+ Keyboard & MS® IntelliMouse™
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- 64MB EDO Memory (expandable to 512MB)
- ECC Memory System
- 4GB Ultra Wide SCSI-3 7,200 RPM Hard Drive
- Integrated Ultra Wide SCSI-3 Controller
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- 3Com 10/100 Twisted Pair Ethernet Adapter
- Three 32-Bit PCI, Two EISA, One PCI/EISA Slots
- 4 DIMM Slots
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- 128MB EDO Memory (expandable to 512MB)
- ECC Memory System
- 4GB Ultra Wide SCSI-3 7,200 RPM Hard Drive
- Integrated Ultra Wide SCSI-3 Controller
- 13X min/32X max SCSI CD-ROM Drive & 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 3Com 10/100 Twisted Pair Ethernet Adapter
- Three 32-Bit PCI, Two EISA, One PCI/EISA Slots
- 4 DIMM Slots
- ▸ **EV500 .28 Screen Pitch 15" Monitor (13.9" viewable)**
- Integrated 32-Bit PCI Graphics with 2MB DRAM
- ▸ **TelePath Modem with x2 Technology**
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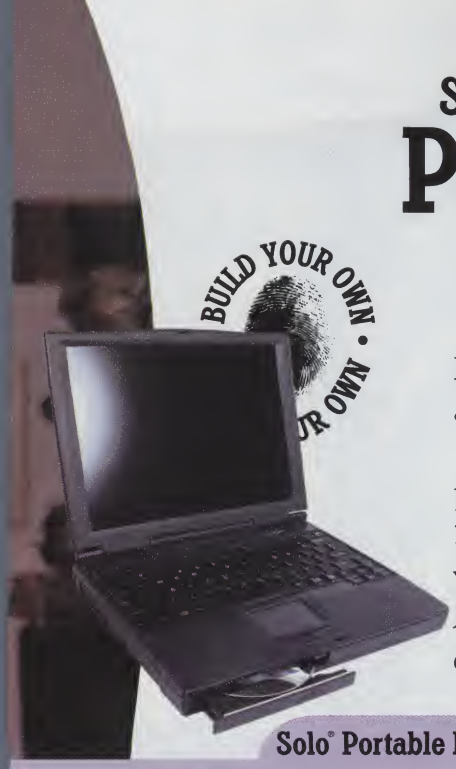

Selling artwork is her stock and trade. Lugging it around isn't. Instead, she wows clients with impressive presentations on a Solo portable PC that cost less than her last order.

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- Modular 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 2GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- Lithium Ion Battery & AC Pack
- USB Ports, CardBus & Zoomed Video Support
- NTSC/PAL Video Output
- Integrated 16-Bit Sound & Stereo Speakers
- PC Card Modem w/ x2™ Technology & cellular support
- EZ Pad Pointing Device
- Carrying Case
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- Modular 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 2GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- Lithium Ion Battery & AC Pack
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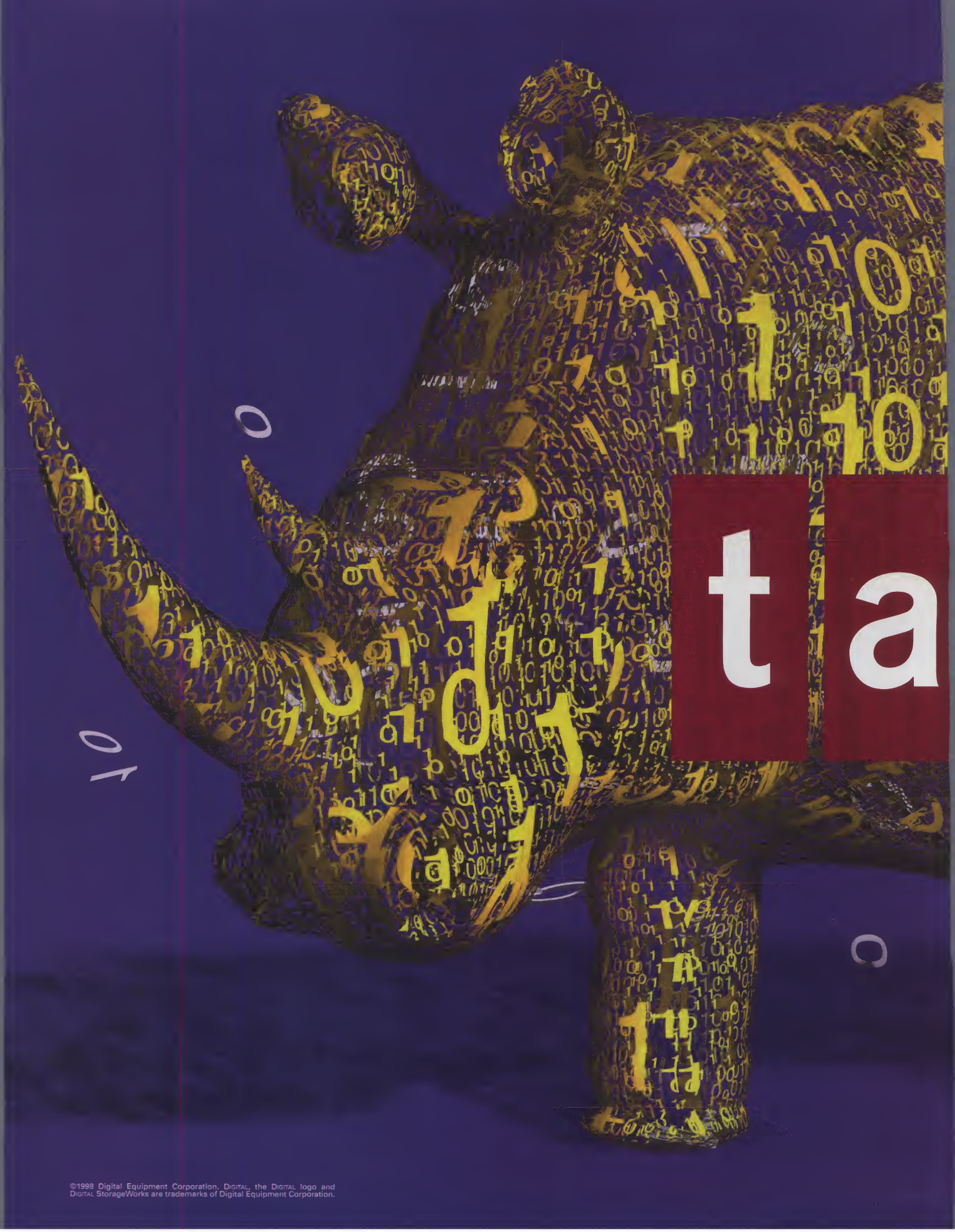

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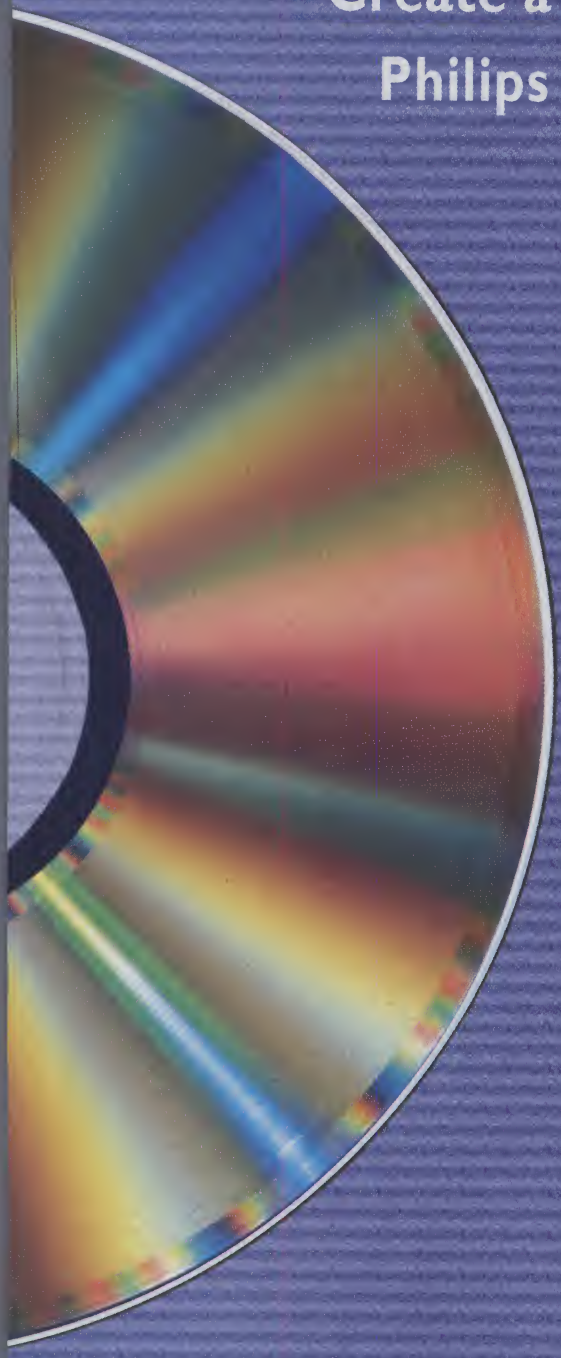

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CROSSROADS 98

Five critical technology decisions. Don't bet your business on the wrong one.

Nobody wants to get stuck with Betamax when the rest of the world's going to VHS. Especially when your business's bottom line is hanging in the balance. But in the fast-changing PC market, where competing, highly hyped technologies are launched one after the other, how do you know which to bet your business on? Cable or ADSL? Java or ActiveX? LCD or gas plasma? USB or FireWire? Rewritable CDs or DVD-RAM? It's confusing, and to make matters worse, the best technology isn't always the one that wins—as the wars between Betamax and VHS proved.

That's where Crossroads 98 comes in. *PC Computing*'s editors scrutinized five key technology battles you need to know about. For each one, we point you to which technology is best for your business today—and which will carry you into the future.

Our editors tested and evaluated the first products to use these technologies. We took them apart, then talked to the industry's leading engineering and marketing experts to get to the inside story. The result? This exclusive visual tour of how these new technologies work—and how they will pay off for your business. Don't buy another product until you read this special report.

PAGE 190 | *Cable vs. ADSL* Get the Net at speeds up to 30 times faster than a 56K modem.

PAGE 193 | *Java vs. ActiveX* Both make the Web interactive, but one will be the standard.

PAGE 196 | *LCD vs. Gas Plasma* Will your next TV hang on a wall? Will your next monitor be flat?

PAGE 198 | *USB vs. FireWire* Peripheral connection too slow? Meet the heirs to the serial port.

PAGE 200 | *CD-RW vs. DVD-RAM* Put hundreds of megabytes on inexpensive silver discs.

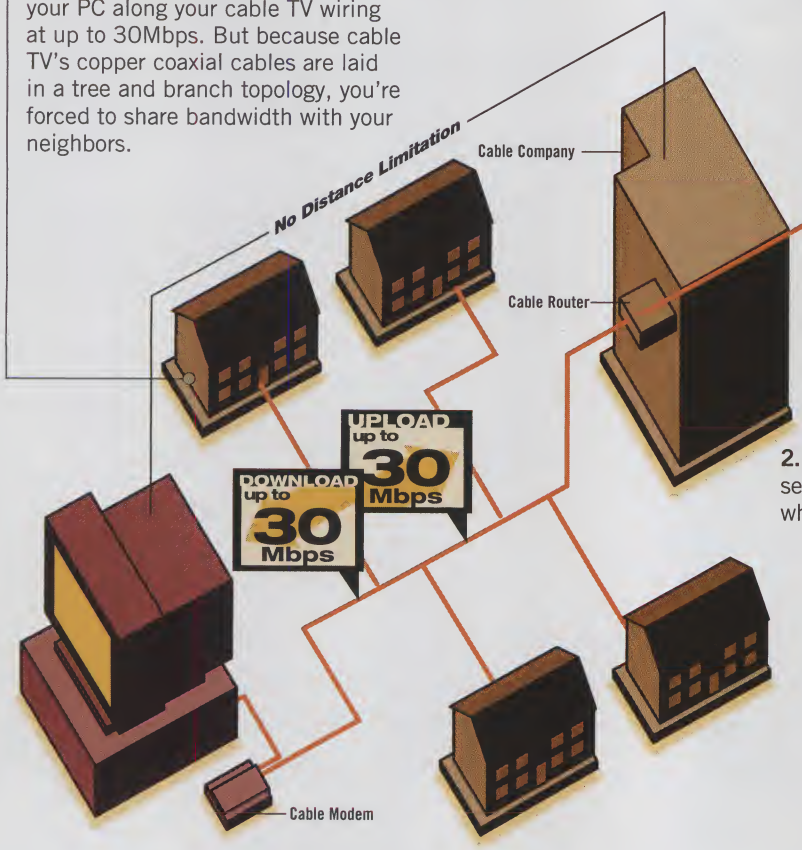
BY RICH SCHWERIN AND RON WHITE

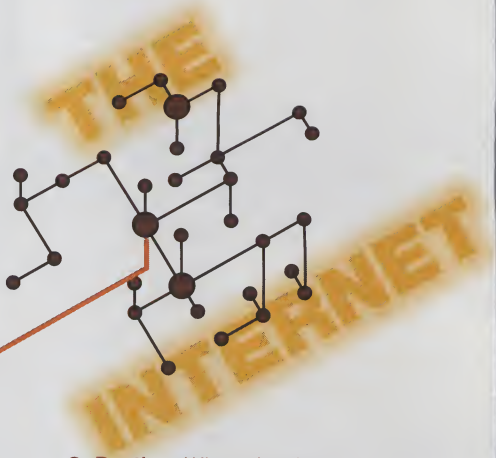
Cable vs. ADSL

Throw away that slowpoke 56Kbps modem. Kiss the pain of ISDN goodbye. Get ready to shift your Internet connection into hyperdrive. The future of fast, fat Web access comes in two flavors—cable modems and asymmetrical digital subscriber line (ADSL) modems. Both boast big bandwidth, but each has its own obstacles to success.

CABLE MODEMS

1. Bandwidth: A two-way cable modem pumps Internet content to your PC along your cable TV wiring at up to 30Mbps. But because cable TV's copper coaxial cables are laid in a tree and branch topology, you're forced to share bandwidth with your neighbors.





3. Routing: When the data request arrives, your cable company routes it to the Net at up to 45Mbps.

2. Sending Requests: At up to 30Mbps your PC sends data requests to your cable company, which provides your Internet service.

4. Download: The marketeers claim that data is sent downstream at 30Mbps, but sharing often makes it more like 1.5Mbps. When your data arrives, the cable modem decodes and then routes it to an Ethernet interface card installed in your PC.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TIMOTHY EDWARD DOWNS

PROS

- Fast, symmetrical access.
- Simple, inexpensive setup.
- TV cable prevalent in most homes.

CONS

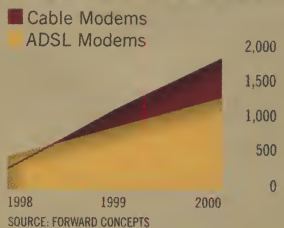
- Shared access can mean slow, spotty throughput.
- No simultaneous use of cable TV.
- Very expensive for businesses.

BEST APPLICATION

Fast residential surfing, where cable television is a given and avoiding Internet *rush hours* is no big deal.

MARKET WATCH

Cable vs. ADSL
(in thousands of units shipped in the United States)

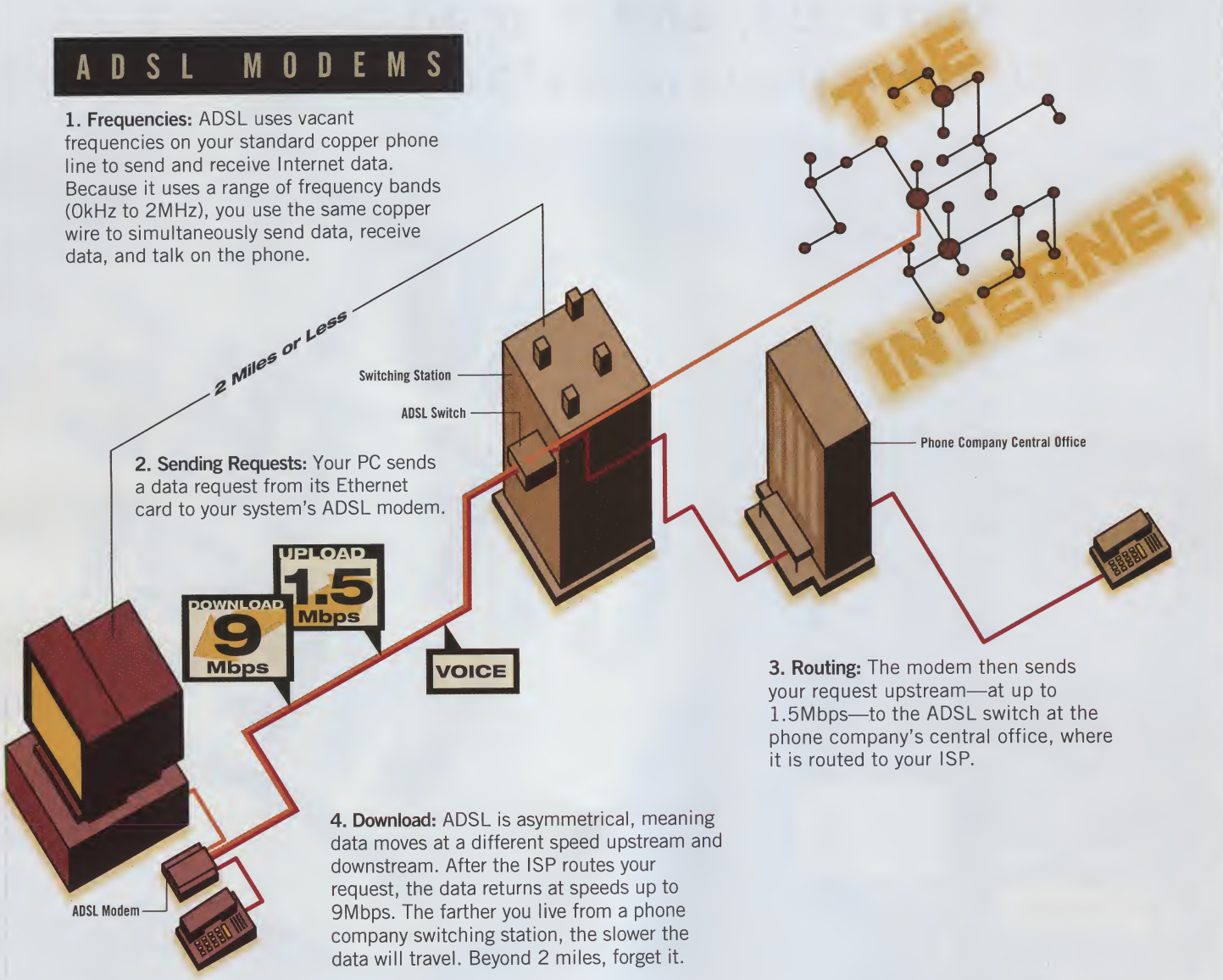


SOURCE: FORWARD CONCEPTS

Home or Away: The vast majority of ADSL modems are sold to businesses, whereas cable modems are sold almost exclusively to homes.

ADSL MODEMS

1. Frequencies: ADSL uses vacant frequencies on your standard copper phone line to send and receive Internet data. Because it uses a range of frequency bands (0kHz to 2MHz), you use the same copper wire to simultaneously send data, receive data, and talk on the phone.



2. Sending Requests: Your PC sends a data request from its Ethernet card to your system's ADSL modem.

3. Routing: The modem then sends your request upstream—at up to 1.5Mbps—to the ADSL switch at the phone company's central office, where it is routed to your ISP.

4. Download: ADSL is asymmetrical, meaning data moves at a different speed upstream and downstream. After the ISP routes your request, the data returns at speeds up to 9Mbps. The farther you live from a phone company switching station, the slower the data will travel. Beyond 2 miles, forget it.

PROS

- Uses standard phone lines; no sharing.
- Simultaneous voice calls.

CONS

- Two-mile limit excludes 40 percent of the United States.
- Costly hardware—$500 to $1,000 per PC.
- Expensive service, from $20 to $200 per month on top of $150 initial setup.

BEST APPLICATION

Businesses, where you can use existing phone lines without having to share bandwidth with your neighbors.

VERDICT

Cable vs. ADSL

At home, cable is the way to go for cheap, speedy access—provided you don't mind sharing with your neighbors and can surf at odd hours. But ADSL is better for businesses. It uses existing telephone lines to deliver reliable access that you don't have to share with anyone, especially your competitors.

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Infolink 397 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

Java vs. ActiveX

It might be eye-popping by today's standards, but tomorrow your Web site will be lame. Mere text and animation won't cut it in the interactive future, so you need Microsoft's ActiveX or Sun Microsystems' Java. As programming languages, both let you create Internet-based applications and new ways of presenting information.

JAVA

PROS

- Cross-platform support.
- Applets reside in the Java Virtual Machine (JVM), providing security.

CONS

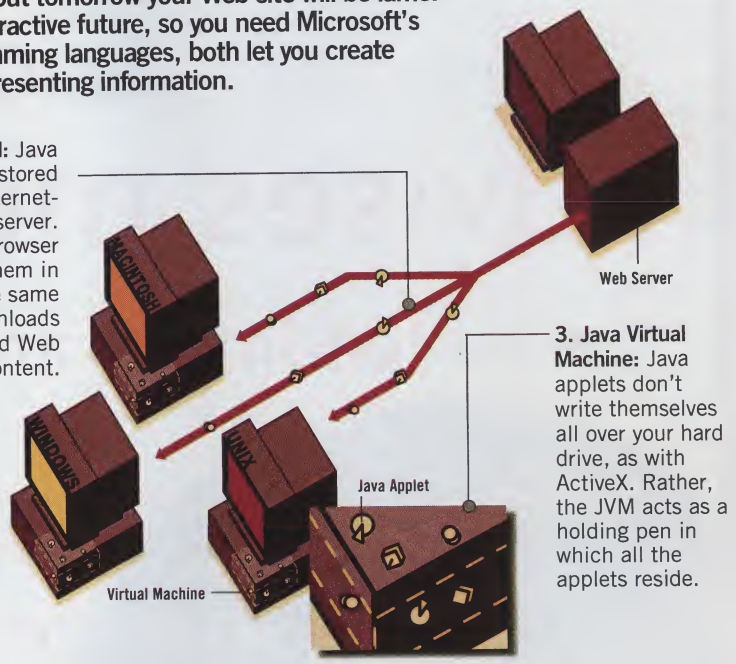
- Applets exist on a single server.
- The JVM can slow performance.

BEST APPLICATION

Cross-platform interactive Web sites.

2. Download: Java applets are stored on an Internet-connected server. Your browser downloads them in much the same way it downloads standard Web content.

1. Cross-Platform: A Java program, or applet, must be run through a compiler that converts it into Java bytecode. When executed, the bytecode runs in a repository called the Java Virtual Machine (JVM).



3. Java Virtual Machine: Java applets don't write themselves all over your hard drive, as with ActiveX. Rather, the JVM acts as a holding pen in which all the applets reside.

ACTIVEX

PROS

- Huge development community.
- Controls can reside anywhere for more powerful applications.

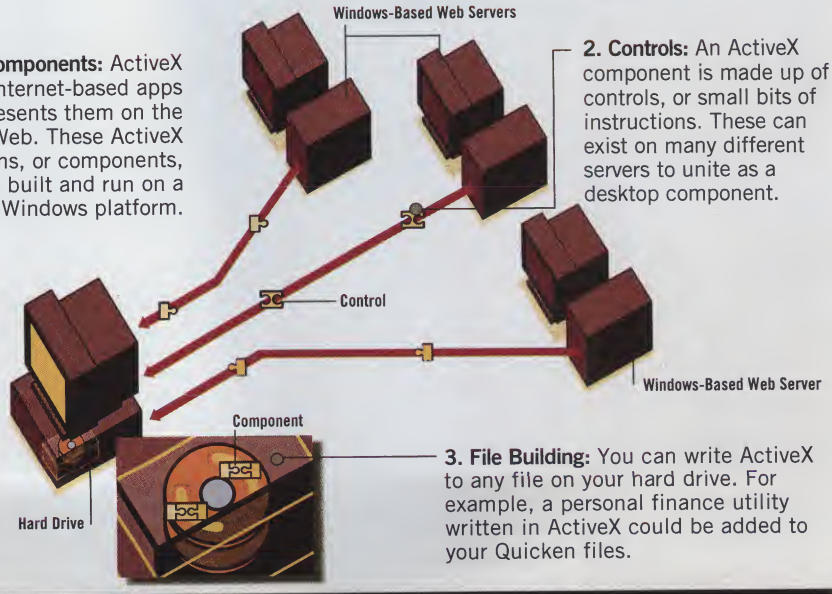
CONS

- Windows-centric model.
- Lack of a Java Virtual Machine can mean security risks.

BEST APPLICATION

Web sites that are richly interactive and full of applications.

1. Components: ActiveX creates Internet-based apps and presents them on the Web. These ActiveX programs, or components, must be built and run on a Windows platform.

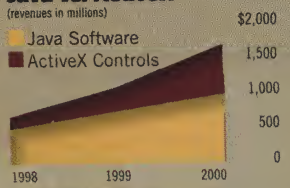


2. Controls: An ActiveX component is made up of controls, or small bits of instructions. These can exist on many different servers to unite as a desktop component.

3. File Building: You can write ActiveX to any file on your hard drive. For example, a personal finance utility written in ActiveX could be added to your Quicken files.

MARKET WATCH

Java vs. ActiveX
(revenues in millions)



SOURCES: INTERNATIONAL DATA CORP. (JAVA), GIGA INFORMATION GROUP (ACTIVEX)

Windows Wins: For good or ill it's a Windows world, so it comes as no surprise that ActiveX will dominate interactive Web sites in the coming years.

VERDICT

Java vs. ActiveX

Without a doubt, tomorrow's Web is interactive. And for the Windows crowd, the best way to get there is ActiveX. But if your needs include Macintosh and Unix, then Java is a more powerful—and logical—choice.

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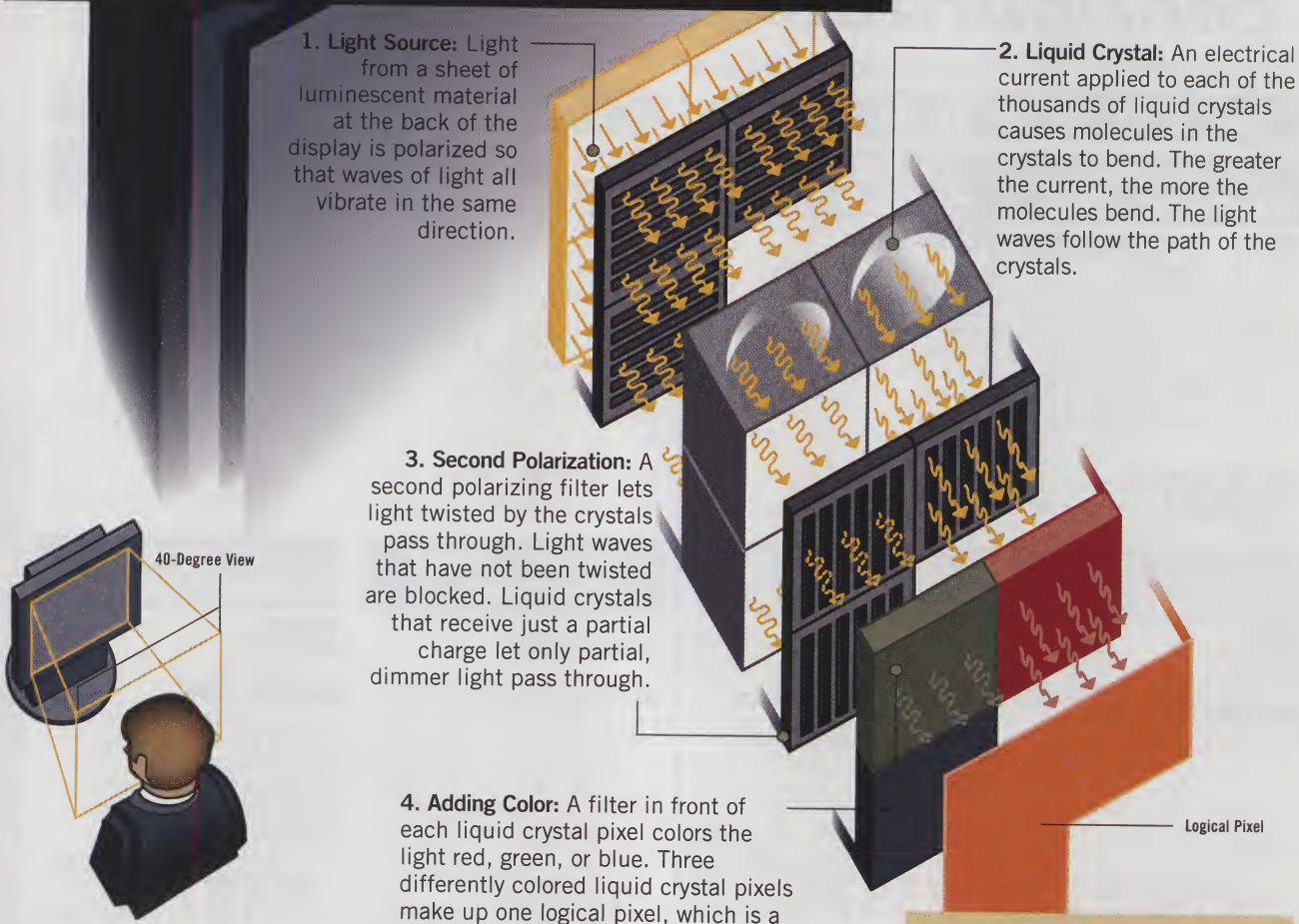
LCD vs. Gas Plasma

Thin has been in for several years in the form of liquid crystal displays (LCDs) mainly on notebooks, but now they're appearing on sleek desktop monitors too. Poised for a takeover, however, are bigger, more brilliant gas plasma displays—very expensive now but due for price cuts that will put them on desks and walls at the office and at home.

LIQUID CRYSTAL DISPLAY



1. Light Source: Light from a sheet of luminescent material at the back of the display is polarized so that waves of light all vibrate in the same direction.

2. Liquid Crystal: An electrical current applied to each of the thousands of liquid crystals causes molecules in the crystals to bend. The greater the current, the more the molecules bend. The light waves follow the path of the crystals.

3. Second Polarization: A second polarizing filter lets light twisted by the crystals pass through. Light waves that have not been twisted are blocked. Liquid crystals that receive just a partial charge let only partial, dimmer light pass through.

40-Degree View

4. Adding Color: A filter in front of each liquid crystal pixel colors the light red, green, or blue. Three differently colored liquid crystal pixels make up one logical pixel, which is a mixture of the three colors that the eye sees as a single dot of light.

Logical Pixel

PROS

- Less expensive than gas plasma.
- Viewable in direct sunlight.
- Low power consumption.

CONS

- Not as bright as CRT displays.
- Image loses brightness when viewed from 40 degrees to the side.
- Limited contrast.

BEST APPLICATION

Battery-powered notebooks, since LCDs require little power compared with gas plasma.

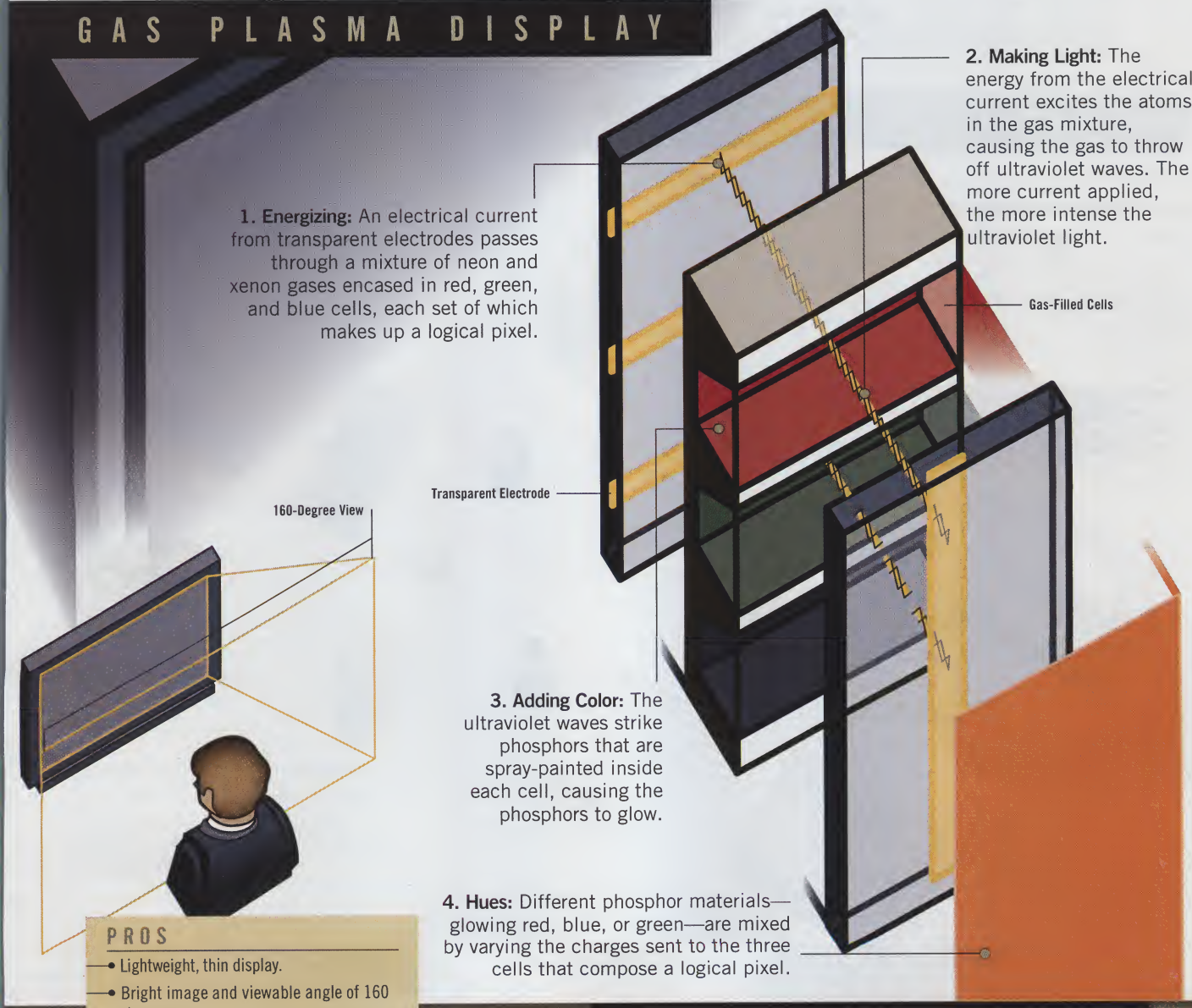
MARKET WATCH

Desktop Monitors
(percent of worldwide market share)

SOURCE: INTERNATIONAL DATA CORP.

A Flat World? Although CRT displays will continue to dominate monitor sales, flat panels including LCDs will gain in market share.

GAS PLASMA DISPLAY



PROS

- Lightweight, thin display.
- Bright image and viewable angle of 160 degrees.
- More practical for giant screens.

CONS

- Image washes out in direct sunlight.
- Uses more power than LCD.
- Expensive due to limited production.

BEST APPLICATION

Monstrously large, presentation-quality displays now—but could eventually replace all desktop displays.

VERDICT

LCD vs. Gas Plasma

Except for the tightest budgets and energy-conscious notebooks, big, brilliant gas plasma is the display of the future—for video as well as PCs. But for now, the prices are so high that LCD is the better choice.

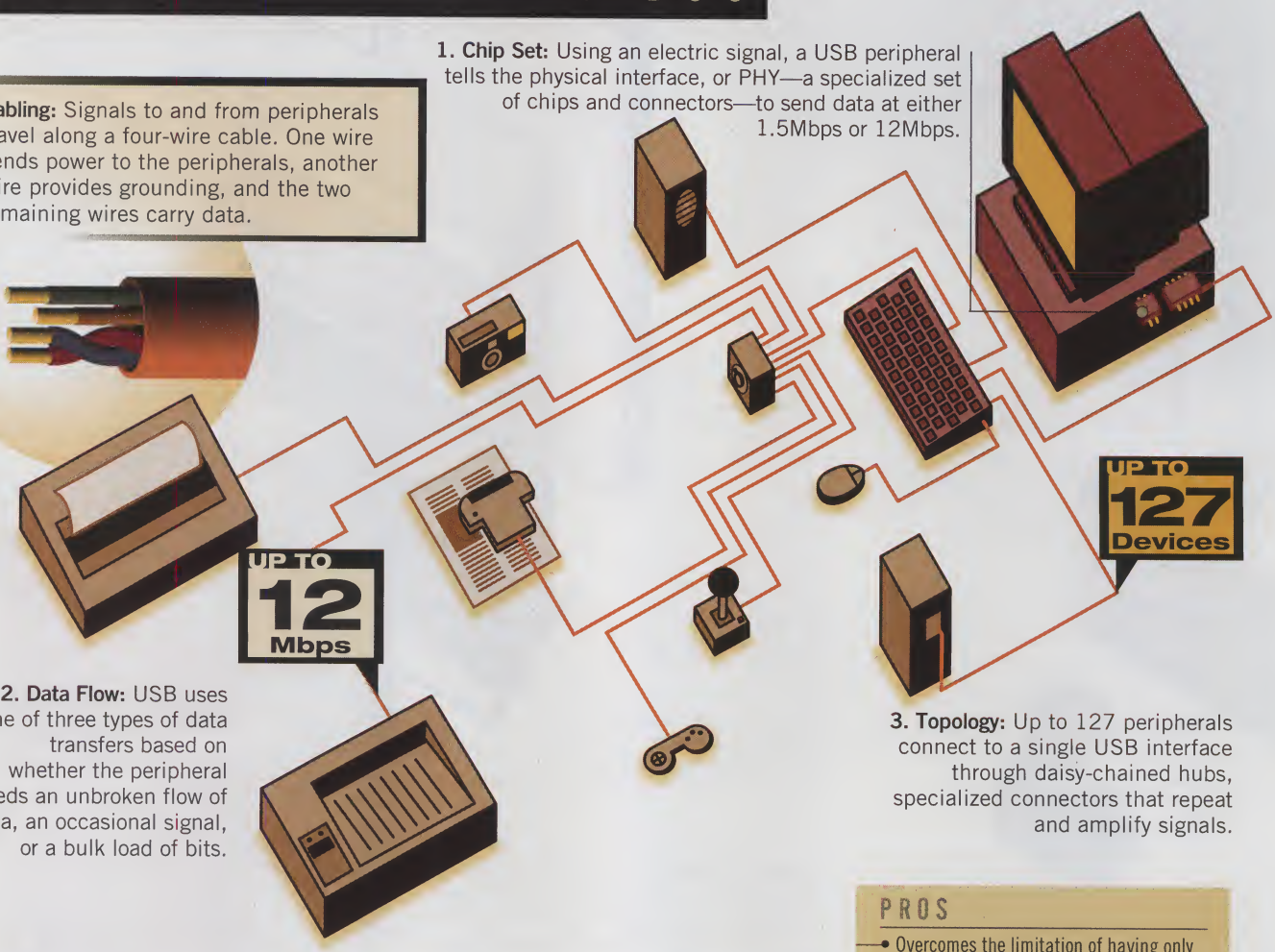
USB vs. FireWire

For two decades serial communications have generally been limited to the serial port's 100Kbps transfer rate. But two new serial bus standards—universal serial bus (USB) and FireWire (IEEE 1394)—take advantage of new protocols and more sensitive components to move a greater amount of data faster.

UNIVERSAL SERIAL BUS

Cabling: Signals to and from peripherals travel along a four-wire cable. One wire sends power to the peripherals, another wire provides grounding, and the two remaining wires carry data.

1. Chip Set: Using an electric signal, a USB peripheral tells the physical interface, or PHY—a specialized set of chips and connectors—to send data at either 1.5Mbps or 12Mbps.



2. Data Flow: USB uses one of three types of data transfers based on whether the peripheral needs an unbroken flow of data, an occasional signal, or a bulk load of bits.

3. Topology: Up to 127 peripherals connect to a single USB interface through daisy-chained hubs, specialized connectors that repeat and amplify signals.

PROS

- Overcomes the limitation of having only four serial ports on a PC.
- Adds less than $1 to the manufacturing cost of a PC.

CONS

- Few peripherals have USB ports.
- Microsoft slow in providing device drivers for USB and Windows.

BEST APPLICATION

Connecting devices for which data-transfer rate is not critical, such as keyboards, mice, printers, and scanners.

MARKET WATCH

USB vs. FireWire
(percent of worldwide market share)

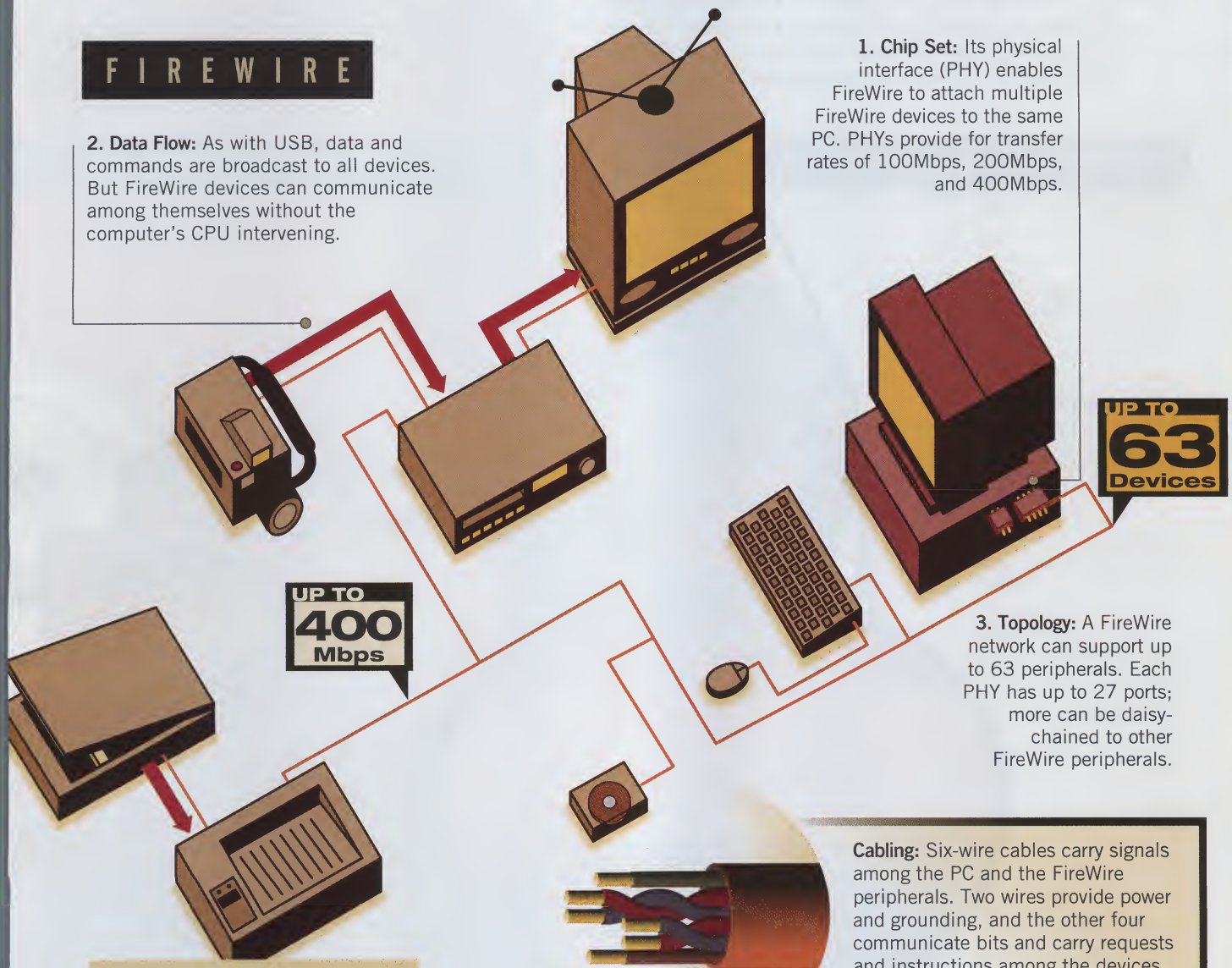
SOURCE: DATAQUEST

Fired Up: Most PCs will ship with USB and FireWire ports by 2001, but peripherals that connect to those ports will be slower in coming.

FIREWIRE

1. Chip Set: Its physical interface (PHY) enables FireWire to attach multiple FireWire devices to the same PC. PHYs provide for transfer rates of 100Mbps, 200Mbps, and 400Mbps.

2. Data Flow: As with USB, data and commands are broadcast to all devices. But FireWire devices can communicate among themselves without the computer's CPU intervening.



3. Topology: A FireWire network can support up to 63 peripherals. Each PHY has up to 27 ports; more can be daisy-chained to other FireWire peripherals.

Cabling: Six-wire cables carry signals among the PC and the FireWire peripherals. Two wires provide power and grounding, and the other four communicate bits and carry requests and instructions among the devices and the PC.

PROS

- Fast enough to transfer any type of data.
- Overcomes serial port limitations.

CONS

- So far, few FireWire peripherals are available.
- Standards are still being reworked.
- Adds more to the manufacturing cost of a PC—$15—than USB.

BEST APPLICATION

High-volume, unsupervised data transfers, such as with disk drives, video cameras, and consumer electronics.

VERDICT

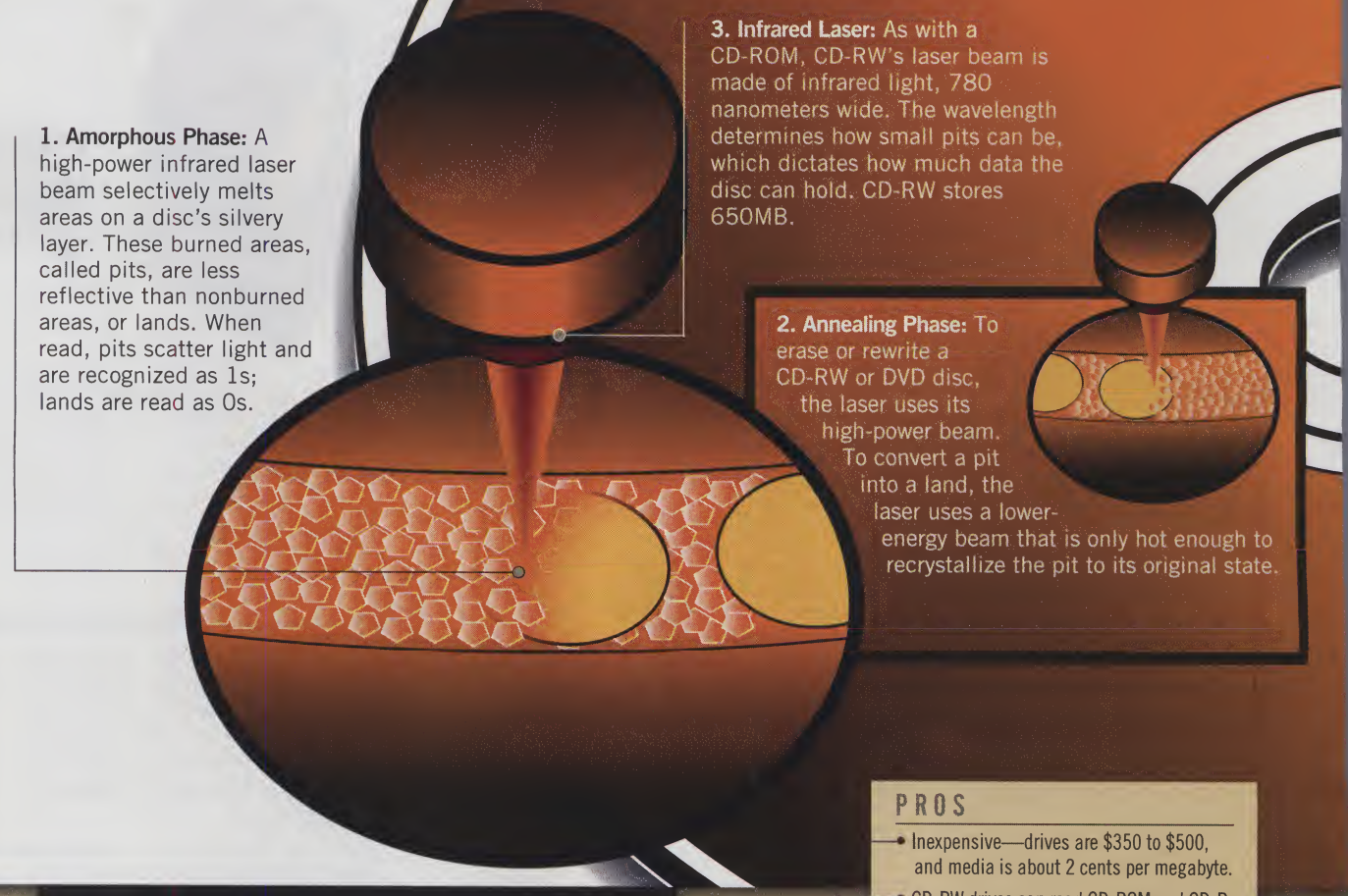
USB vs. FireWire

In a year or two, USB will become the standard for devices needing low-volume transfers. FireWire promises to be an inexpensive replacement for the SCSI bus, but don't expect PC and peripheral makers to agree on a final standard soon.

CD-RW vs. DVD-RAM

Optical storage has been moving so fast that by the time you get a handle on some new type of drive, the closeout sale is already in progress. Two technologies jockeying for the position of heir to write-once CDs are the most versatile: CD-rewritable (CD-RW, left) and DVD-RAM (right), both of which use phase change technology to read and write data.

PHASE CHANGE DATA RECORDING: CD-RW AND



1. Amorphous Phase: A high-power infrared laser beam selectively melts areas on a disc's silvery layer. These burned areas, called pits, are less reflective than nonburned areas, or lands. When read, pits scatter light and are recognized as 1s; lands are read as 0s.

3. Infrared Laser: As with a CD-ROM, CD-RW's laser beam is made of infrared light, 780 nanometers wide. The wavelength determines how small pits can be, which dictates how much data the disc can hold. CD-RW stores 650MB.

2. Annealing Phase: To erase or rewrite a CD-RW or DVD disc, the laser uses its high-power beam. To convert a pit into a land, the laser uses a lower-energy beam that is only hot enough to recrystallize the pit to its original state.

MARKET WATCH

CD-RW vs. DVD-R
(in millions of units shipped worldwide)

SOURCE: INTERNATIONAL DATA CORP.

Give Me CD-RW: But don't forget DVD. Both drive types will sell well—more or less doubling worldwide distribution each year from now until 2000.

PROS

- Inexpensive—drives are $350 to $500, and media is about 2 cents per megabyte.
- CD-RW drives can read CD-ROM and CD-R.

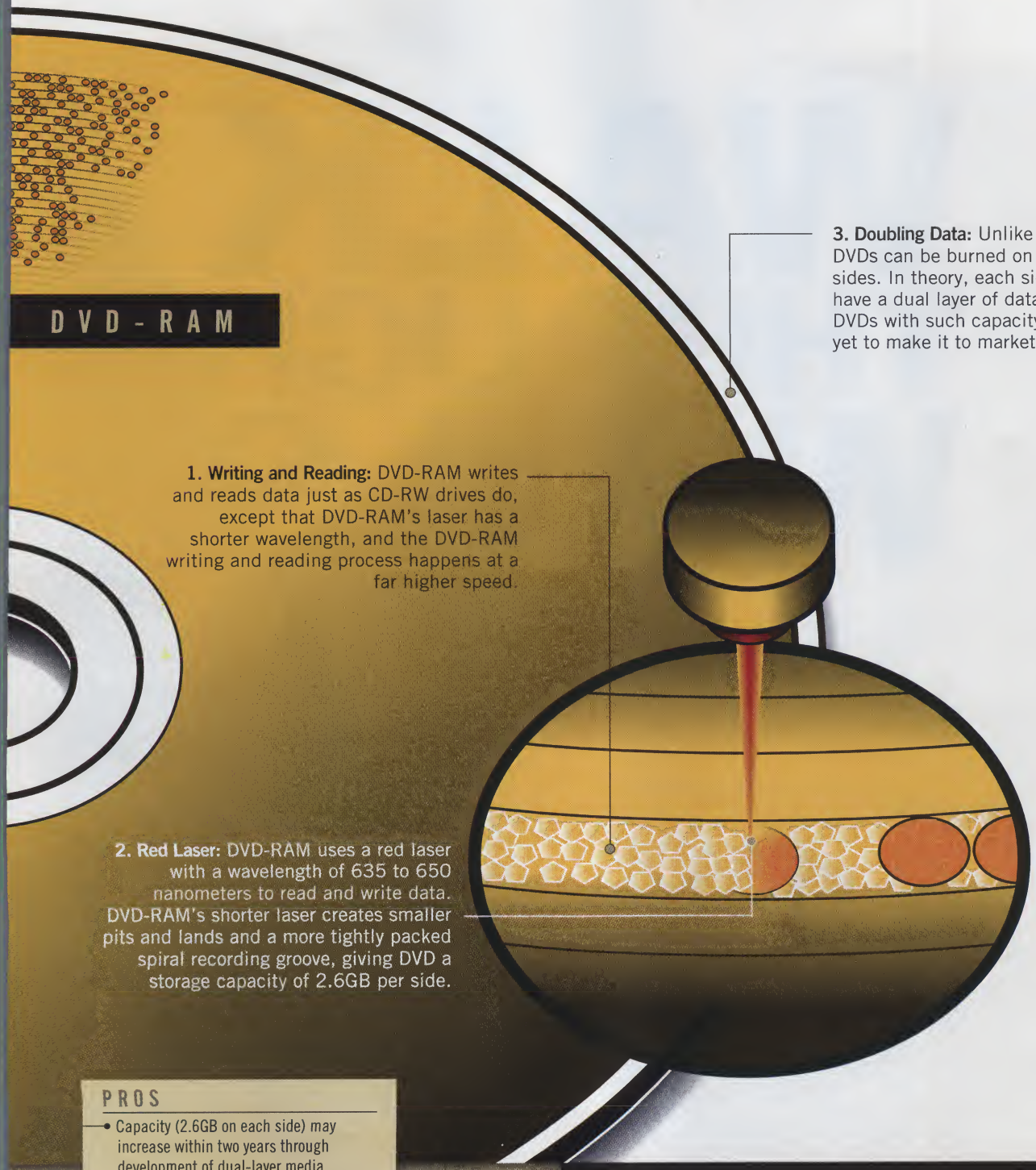
CONS

- Slow—300Kbps (4X) write time and 900Kbps (6X) read time.
- 650MB, with no plans to expand capacity through double-sided discs.

BEST APPLICATION

Small-batch production of CD-ROMs, audio CDs, and discs for users who have CD-ROM drives, but no later drive technology.

DVD-RAM



1. Writing and Reading: DVD-RAM writes and reads data just as CD-RW drives do, except that DVD-RAM's laser has a shorter wavelength, and the DVD-RAM writing and reading process happens at a far higher speed.

2. Red Laser: DVD-RAM uses a red laser with a wavelength of 635 to 650 nanometers to read and write data. DVD-RAM's shorter laser creates smaller pits and lands and a more tightly packed spiral recording groove, giving DVD a storage capacity of 2.6GB per side.

3. Doubling Data: Unlike CD-RW, DVDs can be burned on both sides. In theory, each side can have a dual layer of data, but DVDs with such capacity have yet to make it to market.

PROS

- Capacity (2.6GB on each side) may increase within two years through development of dual-layer media.
- Fast—1.3Mbps write time and 1.2Mbps to 2.7Mbps read time.
- Media will be under a penny per megabyte.

CONS

- Expensive—drives will be $700 to $1,000.
- Does not necessarily read DVD-ROM.

BEST APPLICATION

Archiving, backing up, and transferring lots of data; not for wide distribution.

VERDICT

CD-RW vs. DVD-RAM

In a year or two, when swirling standards finally come to rest through more technological and marketing developments, DVD-RAM will be everybody's disc drive. Until then, use the more standardized CD-RW for sharing large amounts of data with others.

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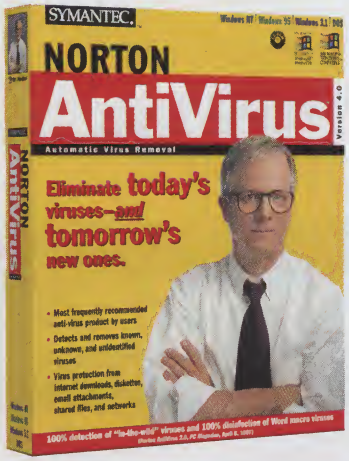

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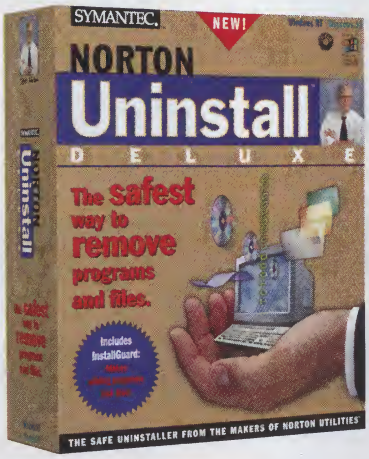

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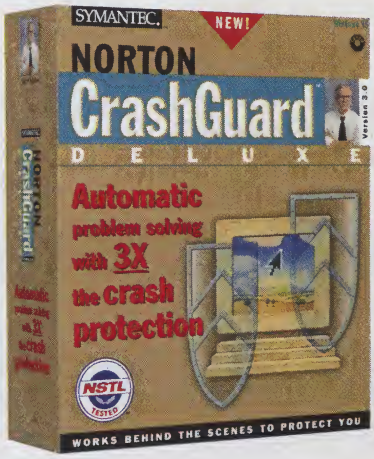

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- 1200HS 19" (17.9" vis, .26dp, 95 kHz) Monitor
- Diamond 8MB 3D AGP Video Card
- 32X Max^ Variable CD-ROM Drive
- Crystal Wavetable Sound
- Altec ACS-495 Full Dolby Surround Sound Speakers with Subwoofer
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- Dell QuietKey Keyboard

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FEATURING MMX TECHNOLOGY

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- 8.4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive (9.5ms)
- 1000HS 17" (16.0" vis, .26dp, 85 kHz) Trinitron Monitor
- STB nVidia 4MB 3D AGP Video Card
- 32X Max^ Variable CD-ROM Drive
- Crystal Wavetable Sound
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- 32X Max^ Variable CD-ROM Drive
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Color *for* Pennies

BY KYLA K. CARLSON

PERSONAL COLOR PRINTERS

- **Speeds as high as 5 ppm color and 9 ppm black.**
- **Resolutions up to 1,200 by 600 dpi and photographic-quality output.**
- **Easy-to-use driver software and plenty of bundled utilities.**

Want to stand out from the crowd? Want to get your ideas noticed? Want to make everything you do rise to the top of the pile? Take a tip from the pros: Everything is better in color.

It's simple—a color printer is an easy and affordable way to make your reports and documents look their best. Not only do today's ink jets and color lasers rival the speeds of workhorse lasers, they also deliver eye-popping color text and images for just pennies per page. Whether you need a personal printer or one the whole office can share, you'll find a color printer that's right for any size budget.

You can buy a personal color ink-jet printer for about the same price as a

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK JOHANN

low-end black-and-white laser printer. So is there a catch? In general, ink-jet text quality still doesn't measure up to that of laser. But there are several ink-jet printers that produce such outstanding text you'd think it was from a laser printer. Besides, add a splash of color to that business letter or report, and who's going to notice the mundane black text? The biggest downfall to ink-jet printers is the long-term cost. The consumables, paper and ink, quickly add up. Cut costs by using plain paper for all but the most final reports—that's when you break out the expensive coated stuff that guarantees head-turning results.

Look sharp, save money, and get your documents noticed. Sixteen printers you can't afford to pass up.

Another cost-saving option is to get a network color printer that the entire office can share. It can double as a monochrome printer, so it's like getting two printers in one. While you'll initially spend up to ten times more on a network color printer than on an ink jet, your long-term expenses for consumables will be less (the cost-per-page average is roughly 11 cents vs. 17 cents per page for an ink jet).

In other words, you'll see an excellent return on investment—a network color printer pays for itself in time saved. And color lasers aren't fussy about the paper you feed them—their results look good even on cheap recycled stock. Also, toner costs less than liquid ink and gives you more pages for the buck in the long run. Still not sure which way to go? We've done the hard part for you, rounding up nine low-end to midrange color ink-jet printers and seven network color printers—six lasers and one solid ink. One thing is for sure: If you want to get noticed, you've got to have color.

NETWORK COLOR PRINTERS

- **Speeds up to 6 ppm color and 16 ppm black.**
- **Smooth color output at resolutions as high as 1,200 dpi.**
- **Easy network configuration and remote administration.**

Budget Eye-Pleasers

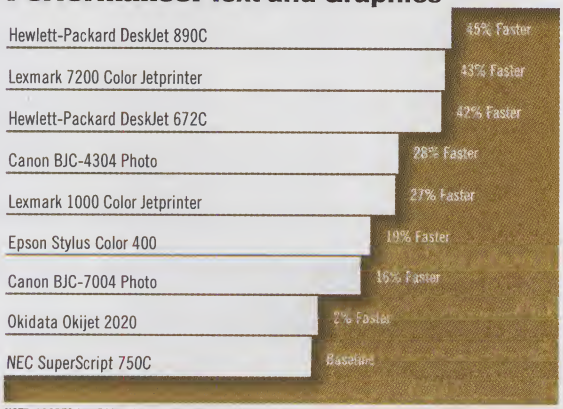
A color printer for less than $200—no kidding. And even at the top of the line, you don't see many ink-jet printers with prices over $400. Today's ink-jets sport higher resolutions than most laser printers, and the results prove it. Business charts dance off the page. Photographs look so real they can go straight into the album.

There is one hitch, however. While your initial expenses may come right out of petty cash, in the long run the cost for consumables will be steep. And the paper needed for super-high-quality output will cost you—sometimes as much as $2 per page. Any ink-jet printer takes standard photocopier paper and generally delivers respectable results. Save the special paper for that important presentation—after you've printed several plain-paper drafts for proofing and revising.

We tested nine color printers with prices ranging from $139 to $399. What does the difference in price buy you? Enough that you should consider spending the extra money. In the low-cost group, we evaluated the Epson Stylus Color 400, the Canon BJC-4304 Photo, the Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 672C, the Lexmark 1000 Color Jetprinter, the NEC SuperScript 750C, and the Okidata Okijet 2020. At the higher end, we tested the Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 890C, the Canon BJC-7004 Photo, and the Lexmark 7200 Color Jetprinter.

Our Labs tested the printers using a Dell Dimension XPS M200S 200MHz Pentium. We evaluated each printer on its performance, usability, print quality, features, and price. We printed a range of business documents, including Microsoft Word files from a presentation, Photoshop graphics images from an image editor, and images and text from an Adobe PageMaker desktop-publishing file. Finally, we requested high-quality paper from each printer's manufacturer to evaluate the quality of graphics images. However, we ran all text and presentation benchmarks using plain paper.

Performance: Text and Graphics



NOTE: SCORES ARE BASED ON RELATIVE PERFORMANCE PRINTING FOR TEXT AND GRAPHICS UNDER WINDOWS 95. ALL TESTS WERE PERFORMED ON A DELL DIMENSION XPS M200S.

Churn the Page: Both Hewlett-Packard DeskJets turned in consistently quick times. The Epson Stylus Color 400 pumped out rapid graphics speeds, but its text speeds need a boost.

Different Strokes Each printer we tested in this roundup is an ink jet, but that's all they have in common. Resolutions ranged from 600 dpi to 1,200 dpi, but higher resolutions don't necessarily guarantee you the best results. And the many tricks companies use to place dots on a page dramatically affect overall output quality. Engine speeds with ink-jet printers can be deceiving too. A high-speed rating (8-ppm black output for the Lexmark 7200 Color Jetprinter, for example) is often for economy mode, when the printer places less ink on the page. This mode results in lighter text, and is used for only the most basic proofing. True ink-jet printing speeds are slower than those of a laser printer. And while some printers are stocked with memory, others rely on a host-based printing process, which uses your system's RAM for printing power.

If you want it all in one ink-jet printer, your choice is the higher-end Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 890C. Its performance is top-notch, thanks to its 24MHz RISC processor—no other printer comes close for short text documents, presentations, or graphics. But more important, the results are stunning. Even though its highest resolution is just 600 dpi, you'll think otherwise when you see the output. Color is smooth, and text is sharp and dark. The DeskJet 890C is a smart choice for high-volume printing because of its speed and a generous 150-sheet input tray (the closely matched Lexmark 7200 also has one). Hewlett-Packard's ColorSmart II printer software is intuitive, and it optimizes the output of low-resolution images such as those from the Internet. At $399, the DeskJet 890C's cost is comparable to that of similarly featured printers. But its performance and output quality put it a notch ahead of the rest.

Low-Maintenance From the moment you take it out of the box, the Canon BJC-7004 Photo demands little attention. With a straightforward setup and tons of software extras, you'll be printing in no time—and printing things you never imagined possible. The best part about the BJC-7004 Photo is its stellar text quality. Letters are so razor-sharp that this printer can easily replace an everyday laser printer and no one would

be the wiser. Text speeds are quick too. Unfortunately, its graphics printing speed doesn't measure up, so allow enough time if you demand high-quality results. You'll find the rich 1,200-by-600 dpi output is worth the wait.

A $400 color printer that does the job is a deal. But you can do almost as well for half as much money with the excellent $179 Epson Stylus Color 400. It makes a terrific printing companion, and you can afford to put one on every employee's desk. Text output was somewhat slow and we noticed the letters were a little jagged, so don't retire your laser printer just yet. But the striking graphics output clocked speeds fast enough to rival the higher-price models. If you want just occasional color, the Stylus Color 400 is a great companion to a laser printer.

Fit to Print: For less than $400 you get it all. The Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 890C serves up the fastest speeds and gives you documents with smooth images and sharp text.

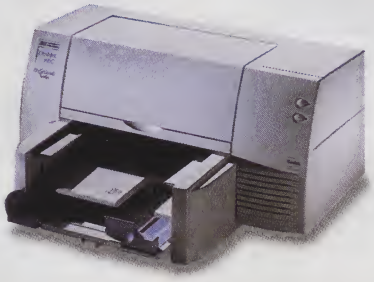
In the Running Several ink-jet printers we tested offer some unique or standout features. For example, the $349 Lexmark 7200 Color Jetprinter has the highest resolution among the ink jets, coming in at 1,200 dpi—and its knockout text quality proves it. Canon's $239 BJC-4304 Photo is the only printer in this price class that supports a small $99 scanning cartridge. Swap this device with your ink cartridge, and your printer does double-duty scanning color images. Hewlett-Packard's $199 DeskJet 672C turned in good all-around speeds, but your money is better spent on the higher-end, $399 DeskJet 890C.

If money is the primary consideration in your color-printer purchase, the Lexmark 1000 Color Jetprinter is worth a long look. At just $139, this feature-rich printer turned in good performance speeds. However, the printer has its limitations, such as a 30-sheet paper tray. NEC's SuperScript 750C offers a tray four times that size, although at a price that's $40 more. The SuperScript could use a big performance boost, and its design is clunky. Okidata's Okijet 2020 fell short in terms of speed and output quality, but its simple setup is a plus.

BEST VALUE

Such a Deal: The $179 Epson Stylus Color 400 produces unbelievably good-looking output.

BEST PERFORMANCE



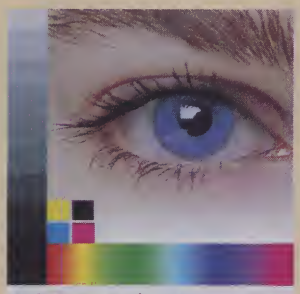
Lickety-Split: For blazing-fast text and sizzling graphics speeds, get the Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 890C.

BEST USABILITY

Easy Color: Canon's BJC-7004 is easy to configure and there's no end to what you'll create with the bundled software.

Image Comparison: Graphics and Text

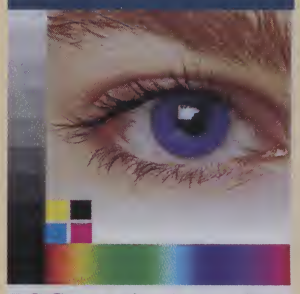
Ink-jet printers vary widely in their output quality depending on the type of paper you're using. Watch for text bleeding, especially when using plain paper, which is more porous and absorbs the wet ink. For the same reason, color images that appear smooth on expensive photographic paper might produce disappointing results when using low-grade recycled paper. Look closely at a printer's output and see how it compares with the original image (at right).



Canon BJC-4304 Photo

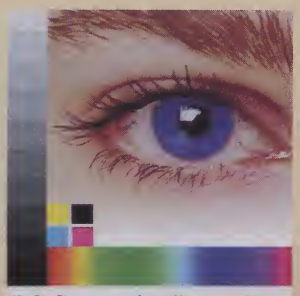
Image Quality: Very smooth but lacks some contrast.
Text: Sharp letters with minimal bleeding.

BEST TEXT



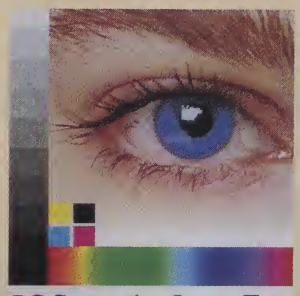
Canon BJC-7004 Photo

Image Quality: Very smooth overall, but slight dithering in shadowy areas.
Text: So razor-sharp, you'd swear this was laser.



Epson Stylus Color 400

Image Quality: Great colors; slight dot patterns.
Text: Rich blacks but slight jaggies.



Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 672C

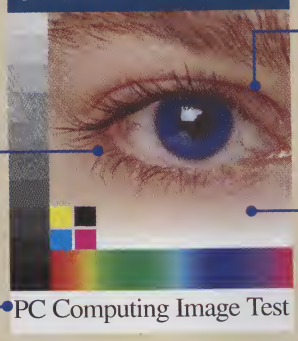
Image Quality: Lots of dithering.
Text: Decent, but bleeding makes for fuzzy letters.

NOTE: APPEARANCE OF SAMPLES MAY BE ALTERED DURING OFFSET PRINTING PROCESS. IMAGE COMMENTS ARE BASED ON OVERALL COMPARISONS OF OUTPUT SAMPLES FROM VARIOUS FILES, NOT JUST THOSE SHOWN.

Image Quality: Be wary of distracting dot patterns and dithering, causing rough images.

Text: Letters should be crisp and as close to laser-quality as possible.

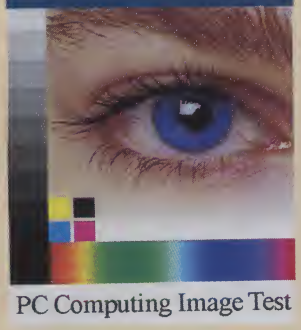
ORIGINAL



Resolution: Smaller dots mean finer detail and higher overall quality.

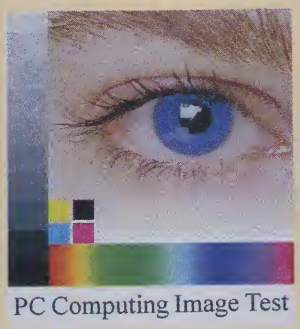
Color Quality: Colors should appear smooth and consistent—especially tricky with flesh tones.

BEST IMAGE QUALITY



Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 890C

Image Quality: Good colors; quite smooth—very slight dithering.
Text: Nice black; only close inspection reveals some rough edges.



Lexmark 1000 Color Jetprinter

Image Quality: Lacks contrast; heavy dot patterns.
Text: A bit light; rough letters.

Lexmark 7200 Color Jetprinter

Image Quality: Nice overall, but slight striping and dithering, and heavy on the magenta.
Text: Sharp and gorgeous.

NEC SuperScript 750C

Image Quality: Colors lack smoothness; dot patterns detract.
Text: Smudgy and rough.

Okidata Okijet 2020

Image Quality: Highly visible dot patterns; overly magenta; images lack smoothness.
Text: Lots of bleeding makes for fuzzy letters.

Top Personal Color Printers

PRODUCT[1]	Price[2]	Rated Speed[3]	Tested RAM/ Max. RAM	Resolution	Cost per Page[4]	Pros	Cons	Verdict
PCComputing BEST **Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 890C** (800) 752-0900	$399	5-ppm color, 9-ppm black	500K/ 500K	600 dpi	9 cents color, 3 cents black	Most beautiful image quality; simple setup; 150-sheet paper tray; fastest speeds overall.	Faint dithering.	☆☆☆☆☆ See how it runs! Keeps any office humming and looking its best.
Canon BJC-7004 Photo (800) 652-2666 *InfoLink No. 601*	$349	3.5-ppm color, 5-ppm black	64K/ 64K	1,200 by 600 dpi	10 cents color, 4 cents black	Easy setup; great software bundle; sharpest text output and good text speeds.	Slow graphics performance.	☆☆☆☆ Text quality so sharp, you'd think it was a laser.
Epson Stylus Color 400 (800) 463-7766	$179	3-ppm color, 4-ppm black	10K/ 10K	720 dpi	9 cents color, 4 cents black	Amazing value; good-looking output; blazing-fast graphics printing speed.	Sluggish text printing; confusing ink cartridge installation.	☆☆☆☆ Blazing graphics output gives the big guns a run for the money.
Lexmark 7200 Color Jetprinter (800) 539-6275 *InfoLink No. 602*	$349	3-ppm color, 8-ppm black	Host-based	1,200 dpi	17 cents color, 3 cents black	Large, 150-sheet capacity; gorgeous laser-quality text; excellent overall speeds.	Paper smearing in heavily coated documents; some inaccurate alerts.	☆☆☆☆ Its output makes you proud of any document, and it won't make you wait.
Canon BJC-4304 Photo (800) 652-2666 *InfoLink No. 603*	$239	2-ppm color, 5-ppm black	64K/ 64K	720 by 360 dpi	14 cents color, 3 cents black	Optional scanning cartridge; generous software bundle; sharp text quality; decent price and performance.	Prints presentations at a snail's pace; images lack contrast.	☆☆☆ Need a printer and a scanner? No problem. Get great-looking text too.
Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 672C (800) 752-0900	$199	1.5-ppm color, 4-ppm black	512K/ 512K	600 dpi	10 cents color, 4 cents black	Simple setup; quick overall speeds; good price.	Graphics images overly dithered; letters a bit fuzzy.	☆☆☆ A respectable printer, but spend a little more for its higher-end sibling.
Lexmark 1000 Color Jetprinter (800) 539-6275 *InfoLink No. 604*	$139	1.5-ppm color, 3.5-ppm black	Host-based	600 dpi	17 cents color, 3 cents black	Rock-bottom price; compact design; competitive performance speeds.	No output tray; some ink-drying problems; images lack contrast; only 30-sheet paper tray.	☆☆☆ Small in size and price, but the rest of the package could use some work.
NEC SuperScript 750C (800) 632-4650 *InfoLink No. 605*	$179	2-ppm color, 6-ppm black	1MB/ not upgrad-able	600 dpi	11 cents color, 3 cents black	Good-size, 120-sheet paper tray; great price.	Tricky setup; rough output; huge, clunky design; consistently slow; error messages could be clearer.	☆☆ Its design could use an overhaul, both inside and out.
Okidata Okijet 2020 (800) 654-3282 *InfoLink No. 606*	$249 list	1-ppm color, 4-ppm black	Host-based	600 dpi	12 cents color, 3 cents black	Simple setup; good price.	No photo paper available; fuzzy text and rough graphics; slow text printing.	☆☆ Spend a little more on a competitor and end up with a better printer.

[1]FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO WWW.PCCOMPUTING.COM/INFOLINK. [2]ESTIMATED STREET PRICE UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE. [3]VENDOR SPECIFICATIONS. [4]VENDOR SPECIFICATIONS; COST REFLECTS 5 PERCENT COVERAGE FOR BLACK, 15 PERCENT COVERAGE FOR COLOR.

☆☆☆☆☆ *Excellent* ☆☆☆☆ *Good* ☆☆☆ *Acceptable* ☆☆ *Poor* ☆ *Unacceptable*

"The NEC SuperScript 1260 wins our Best Buy seal for speed, print quality and competitive price."

-Home Office Computing, September 1997

"It doesn't slice or dice, but NEC's SuperScript 1260N brings 12ppm workgroup printing to a new low price without sacrificing options."

-Windows Sources, September 1997

"For a fast network printer, this is one of the best deals around."

-PC World, November 1997

The fat lady has sung, showered, changed and gone home.

"It's a desktop printer that's tough enough for the network and, at this price, hard to resist."

-PC Computing A List, since July 1997

Very simply, the SuperScript™ 1260 is one virtuoso performer. Even the critics agree that it's clearly the best value in 12 ppm printers today. With its 60MHz processor and PrintGear™ technology from Adobe,® it breezes through any network queue. And our own SharpEdge™ technology raises image quality to new highs. When you consider the SuperScript 1260 costs just $599,* we're certain that you, too, will be singing its praises. To learn more call (800) NEC-INFO. Or, to get your free "The fat lady has sung..." t-shirt, visit www.nec.com/nectech/id. (One per location; quantities limited.) Expect more. Experience more.

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Infolink 235 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

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Just play.

To play, go to www.pccomputing.com and click

More than 55 products to win!

PCComputing ten years of leadership 10

SWEEPSTAKES II

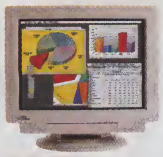
To celebrate our 10th anniversary, PC Computing has created Product Puzzler, a fun and exciting online game that offers lots of chances to win cool products. Like systems, printers, monitors, software, and more.

It's easy. Simply, click to flip the game cards until a product match is made and enter to win that product. Play more than once or come back each week and enter to win multiple products.

And while you're playing the Puzzler, check out our showcase of PC Computing issues featuring technology breakthroughs over the last 10 years.

OFFICIAL RULES: 1. To enter sweepstakes, go to http://www.pccomputing.com and click the PC Computing 10th Anniversary Sweepstakes II icon. Play PC Computing's Product Puzzler by flipping and successfully matching Product Puzzler cards from the game grid. Upon a successful Product Puzzler match, submit an entry form for a chance to win that product in a random drawing and include the following information: name and address, Internet or other e-mail address and daytime and evening phone numbers. Five chances will be given to flip a pair of Product Puzzler cards to make a successful match. You may also enter instantly for a chance to win the featured product of the week by submitting an entry form and include the following information: name and address, Internet or other e-mail address and daytime and evening phone numbers. One entry per person per product. Entrant may enter for a chance to win as many separate products as he/she has successfully matched and submitted an entry for that product's random drawing. All judging will be under the supervision of Ziff-Davis Inc., whose decisions are final on all matters relating to this offer. 2. No purchase or payment necessary to enter. The sweepstakes begins May 5, 1998 and ends July 14, 1998. All entries must be received by midnight July 14, 1998 (Pacific Daylight Time). Drawing will be held by July 21, 1998. Winners will be selected in a random drawing from among all eligible entries received for each prize product and will be conducted under the supervision of Ziff-Davis Inc. The odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received by the date given on the official rules and submitted in accordance with the rules. Winners will be notified by e-mail, regular mail or by phone. 3. The sweepstakes is open to legal residents of the United States, who are at least eighteen years of age. SWEEPSTAKES VOID IN FLORIDA AND FLORIDA RESIDENTS ARE NOT ELIGIBLE. Employees and their immediate families of Ziff-Davis Inc., its affiliates, subsidiaries, and its advertising and promotion agencies are not eligible. All federal, state and local laws and regulations apply. The sweepstakes is void where prohibited or restricted by law. A 1099 form will be filed with the IRS for major prize winners. 4. Prizes and Value: 3 CrossPad, $399 each; 1 EX700, $629 each; 4 Cvideo-Mail Professional, $249 each; 1 Latitude CP M233ST, $2,899 each; 5 Canvas 5 for Windows 95/NT, $599.95 each; 5 Dragon NaturallySpeaking Deluxe, $695 each; 5 Dragon NaturallySpeaking Preferred, $229 each; 2 Dragon NaturallySpeaking Personal, $109 each; 3 DirecDuo, $699 each; 5 Evolution Mouse-Trak, $99 each; 2 Optra SC 1275, $3,000 each; 1 99T Monitor, $850 each; 1 MVP 1950, $1,999 each; 1 MultiSync A700, $499 each; 3 Studio 400, $229 each; 1 SyncMaster 500 TFT, $2,979 each; 1 Baby Grand, $1,099 each; 3 Velocity 128, $149 each; 5 In-Defense, $109 each; 1 TigerDirect PC Cinema, $1,399.99 each; 4 Internet Office 450, $189 each. 5. Entrants agree to abide by the terms of these official rules and by the decisions of Ziff-Davis Inc. which are final and binding on all matters pertaining to this sweepstakes. Ziff-Davis Inc. will arrange for delivery of all prizes. The winners will be required to submit a signed affidavit of eligibility and liability/publicity release, and confirmation that they have followed the rules of the sweepstakes. The affidavit must be signed and returned within 15 days of attempted notification. In the event of non compliance within this period, an alternate winner will be selected. Any prize notification or prize returned to the sponsor as undeliverable will result in the awarding of that prize to an alternate winner. By

CrossPad
3 Portable Digital Notepads Awarded
Value: $399 each



EX700
1 Monitor Awarded
Value: $629

CVideo-Mail Professional
4 Video E-mail Packages Awarded
Value: $249 each

Latitude CP M233ST
1 Notebook Awarded
Value: $2,899

Canvas 5 for Windows 95/NT
5 Software Packages Awarded
Value: $599.95 each

Dragon Naturally-Speaking Deluxe
5 Software Packages Awarded
Value: $695 each

Dragon Naturally-Speaking Preferred
5 Software Packages Awarded
Value: $229 each

Dragon Naturally-Speaking Personal
2 Software Packages Awarded
Value: $109 each

DirecDuo
3 Satellite Dishes Awarded
Value: $699 each

Evolution Mouse-Trak
5 Trackballs Awarded
Value: $99 each

Optra SC 1275
2 Color Laser Printers Awarded
Value: $3,000 each

on the "10th Anniversary Sweepstakes" icon.

99T Monitor
1 Monitor Awarded
Value: $850

MVP-1950
1 System Awarded
Value: $1,999

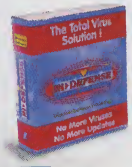
MultiSync A700
1 Monitor Awarded
Value: $499

Studio 400
3 Video Editing Systems Awarded
Value: $229 each

SyncMaster 500 TFT
1 Flat Panel Monitor Awarded
Value: $2,979

Baby Grand
1 System Awarded
Value: $1,099

Velocity 128
3 Multimedia Accelerators Awarded
Value: $149 each



In-Defense
5 Software Packages Awarded
Value: $109 each

TigerDirect PC Cinema
1 Home Entertainment System Awarded
Value: $1,399.99

Internet Office 450
4 UPS Systems Awarded
Value: $189 each

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Color All Around

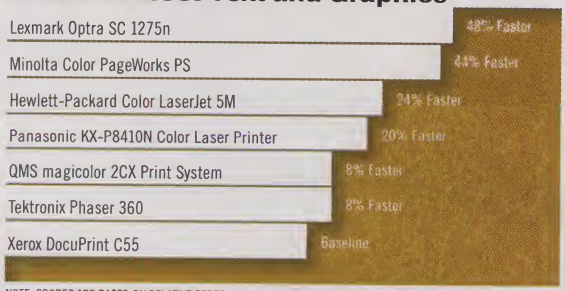
When it comes to color, there's no need to be stingy. A shared network color printer means everyone from the mailroom to the executive boardroom can have lively looking documents.

Workgroup color printers cost less than half of what they did when they hit the market four years ago. And respectable engine speeds mean these shared printers serve up speeds fast enough for everyday monochrome documents too.

We put seven network color printers through their paces: Lexmark's Optra SC 1275n, Hewlett-Packard's Color LaserJet 5M, QMS's magicolor 2CX Print System, Minolta's Color PageWorks PS, Tektronix's Phaser 360, Xerox's DocuPrint C55, and Panasonic's KX-P8410N. With prices falling steadily, the printers in this bunch range from a mere $3,299 to $5,399—a far cry from the $7,000 to $10,000 color laser printers of years past. We tested the printers under a Microsoft Windows NT 4.0 server hosting Windows 95–based Dell Dimension XPS M200S clients. The server, clients, and network printers were connected to a Bay Networks NetGear Ethernet hub. We evaluated the printers on several factors, including performance, print quality, features, price, and usability. Performance and print-quality tests included a range of documents, from Microsoft Word text files to a PowerPoint presentation to Adobe PageMaker and Photoshop graphics images. Our usability tests included evaluating how printers handled real-world annoyances such as paper jams, and out-of-paper and low-toner messages.

All the printers in this group except one use laser engines. The odd printer out, the Tektronix Phaser 360, relies on solid-ink technology, which makes for easy and mess-free setup and maintenance. The best part about the Phaser 360 is its fast color speeds—up to 6 ppm. But unfortunately, that 6-ppm engine speed is what you'll find for monochrome text documents as well, making this printer a better choice for those who plan to print mostly in color, or for workgroups that need a color printer and already have a fast monochrome network printer.

Performance: Text and Graphics



NOTE: SCORES ARE BASED ON RELATIVE PERFORMANCE PRINTING FOR TEXT AND GRAPHICS UNDER WINDOWS 95 IN AN NT SERVER ENVIRONMENT. ALL TESTS WERE PERFORMED ON A DELL DIMENSION XPS M200S.

Between the Lines: The QMS magicolor 2CX churns out the text, and the Tektronix Phaser 360 is a demon with presentations. But the Lexmark Optra SC is the champ for both text and graphics.

Flying Colors The perfect network printer doesn't exist yet. If it did, every company would have one—or more. But the best overall printer today is the $3,499 Lexmark Optra SC 1275n. This reasonably priced, versatile printer not only churns out pages quickly, but also offers sharp 600-dpi print quality for both text and graphics so your documents always look their best.

When printing 50-page text documents, the Optra finished just behind the QMS magicolor 2CX and well ahead of the rest of the pack. And the Optra promises to be one of the most worry-free printers your network can handle. The MarkVision printer-management software uses a graphical interface that makes remote printer monitoring and support a snap. The standard paper capacity isn't outstanding at 400 sheets and it supports only legal and letter sizes, but there are a host of paper-handling accessories you can buy. To handle a variety of documents, the Optra ships with PCL5, PCL6, and PostScript Level 2 printing languages.

Hewlett-Packard's Color LaserJet 5M gets the nod for the best usability. So it's a little big and not the most attractive color laser printer we've seen. But the Color LaserJet 5M is easy to set up; it includes a large, detailed LED panel and an intuitive control panel with prompts. The internal HP JetDirect print server supports Ethernet, LocalTalk, and nearly all network operating systems. The accompanying JetAdmin printer management software provides remote feedback and management features for your administrator, including installation and configuration information and job-status management. While its output is a mere 300 dpi (the lowest in this roundup), Hewlett-Packard includes technology to boost the resolution to the equivalent of 1,200 dpi. The LaserJet 5M serves up superb paper handling—it's the only printer in the bunch to support tabloid-size media (for monochrome printing) right out of the box. These features cost you, though—the LaserJet 5M is on the pricey side at $5,199.

Dollars and Sense If you're on a budget but still demand power and quality, look to the QMS magicolor 2CX. At $3,699 it's not the least expensive printer in the group, but it gives you a lot for your money. Our configuration included 66MB of

RAM. Not enough memory for you? No problem. You can add up to 384MB—almost twice as much as the Optra SC 1275n holds. Even with its low price, the magicolor has top-notch network-management tools. CrownAdmin 3 lets administrators install, manage, and configure print settings remotely, and CrownView tracks print jobs via any Internet browser. The magicolor's text speeds were the fastest in the group by a large margin. If you plan to print lots of photos or work with Adobe Photoshop, the magicolor isn't the wisest choice; it hit performance snags when printing from Photoshop, logging the lowest numbers there by far. If you need the highest-quality graphics, you can boost the 600-dpi output up to 1,200 dpi with more RAM.

Prints Charming: The $3,499 Lexmark Optra SC 1275n not only serves up great speeds and feeds, it also makes sure everyone connected to your network has the best-looking documents. It's priced right too.

Big Picture Minolta's $3,299 Color PageWorks PS is also a good printer to consider if you're budget-conscious. However, its text output doesn't measure up to its stunning graphics results. The $3,695 Tektronix Phaser 360 also produced unimpressive text quality and slow text speeds. But there is a bonus with the Phaser 360 that you won't find with the other printers: free black ink. Tektronix is giving away its black crayons—not a bad deal. The $3,500 Xerox DocuPrint C55 produced rich text output, but it's not the best choice if you demand top-quality network and remote administration features or good performance. The Panasonic KX-P8410N Color Laser Printer, the only host-based network printer we tested, also lacks remote administration features—and is a lot pricier at $5,399. In addition, the Panasonic KX-P8410N doesn't include any languages such as PostScript or PCL, but rather relies on Windows' Graphical Device Interface for its printing. This puts a huge drain on the host system, which Panasonic recommends should be a 133MHz Pentium or faster with 500MB of free hard disk space—ouch. On the plus side, the Panasonic KX-P8410N's paper handling is strong, supporting 850 sheets out of the box.

BEST VALUE

Room to Grow: The QMS magicolor 2CX packs in mega-features at a minimum price.

BEST PERFORMANCE

Jack of All Trades: Whatever your printing needs, the Lexmark Optra SC 1275n can handle the workload.

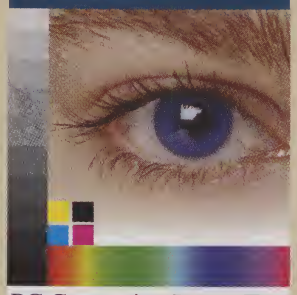
BEST USABILITY

Easy Does It: Hewlett-Packard's Color LaserJet 5M has versatile paper handling and easy-to-use software.

Image Comparison

Because network color printers do double duty printing text documents, beware of jagged letters. In graphics images, watch for dithering patterns that detract from the overall output. (For more details, see page 210.)

ORIGINAL



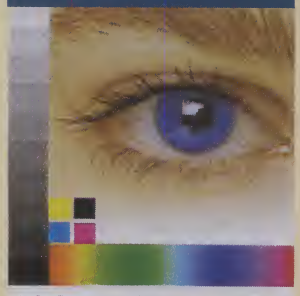
PC Computing Image Test

PC Computing Image Test

Hewlett-Packard Color LaserJet 5M

Image Quality: Some banding and dithering; dull colors.
Text: Sharp and easy to read.

BEST TEXT



PC Computing Image Test

Lexmark Optra SC 1275n

Image Quality: Smooth colors, but some horizontal banding.
Text: Outstanding—sharp and rich.

PC Computing Image Test

Minolta Color PageWorks PS

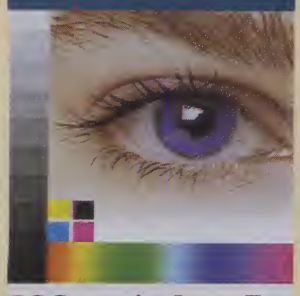
Image Quality: Very smooth; a bit heavy on the magenta.
Text: Acceptable, but not overly sharp.

PC Computing Image Test

Panasonic KX-P8410N

Image Quality: Dull colors; pixelated; horizontal and vertical striping.
Text: A bit too light and dull.

BEST IMAGE QUALITY



PC Computing Image Test

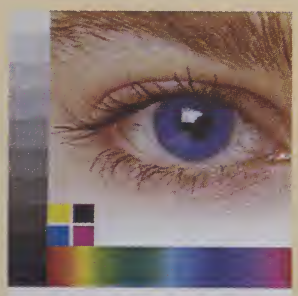
QMS magicolor 2CX Print System

Image Quality: Smooth images and good color matching.
Text: A slight bit jagged.

PC Computing Image Test

Tektronix Phaser 360

Image Quality: Good color balance, but apparent dithering.
Text: Jagged and fuzzy letters.



PC Computing Image Test

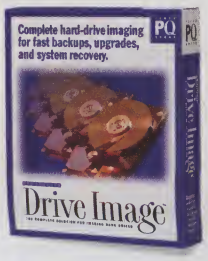
Xerox DocuPrint C55

Image Quality: Heavy dithering and moiré patterns.
Text: Sharp, dark, and crisp.

NOTE: APPEARANCE OF SAMPLES MAY BE ALTERED DURING OFFSET PRINTING PROCESS. IMAGE COMMENTS ARE BASED ON OVERALL COMPARISONS OF OUTPUT SAMPLES FROM VARIOUS FILES, NOT JUST THOSE SHOWN.

Crash. Boom. Bang. Click.

A click of a button and you're up and running again.



From the makers of PartitionMagic®

Your hard drive blew up. You lost your tax spreadsheets. Your addresses. That critical business proposal. Not to mention your sanity. You had your whole life contained in a few gigs. Which is why it's a good thing you used Drive Image™ from PowerQuest®. In minutes, you were able to make a complete backup of your hard drive on a Zip®, JAZ®, or almost any other removable media. When disaster struck, you simply reloaded the copy of your hard drive and you were back in business. No hassles. No missing preferences, partitions or passwords. No problems. Just a click of a button and your computer was restored to its exact state before the crash. It's that simple.

And what's more, Drive Image is also:

Easy–A user-friendly interface makes it easy to manage your saved files. And a step-by-step wizard simplifies the backup process.

Fast–Drive Image can now create a compressed image of your hard drive up to eight times faster than before. Plus, with its patent-pending SmartSector™ technology, Drive Image can copy significantly faster than traditional backup methods.

Safe–Drive Image now features ImageShield™ password protection and encryption to protect critical information. It also automatically checks disk integrity and looks for bad sectors to prevent data loss from occurring.

Flexible–You can quickly restore your whole hard drive or recover individually selected files. Drive Image also allows you to "span" across removable media, such as Zip®, JAZ®, and SyQuest® drives.

Now, restoring your hard drive is as easy as blowing it up.

For more information about Drive Image, or to learn about additional licensing options, call 1-800-379-2566.

Get $15 cash back from PowerQuest.
Ask your reseller for details.

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w w w . p o w e r q u e s t . c o m
Infolink 307 at: www.pccomputing.com/infolink

POWER® PQ QUEST

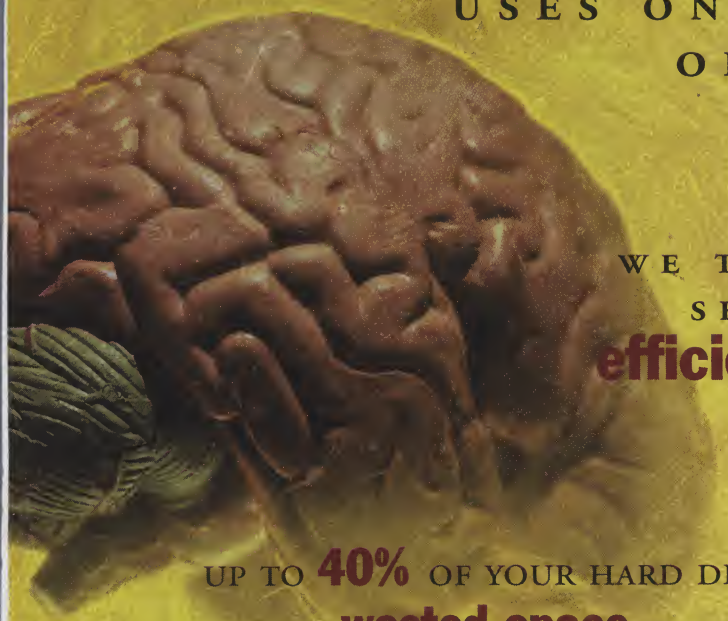
Top Network Color Printers

PRODUCT[1]	Price[2]	Rated Speed[3]	Tested RAM/ Max. RAM	Resolution/ Ink Type	Cost per Page[4]	Pros	Cons	Verdict
PC Computing BEST **Lexmark Optra SC 1275n** (800) 539-6275 *InfoLink No. 607*	$3,499	3-ppm color, 12-ppm black	32MB/ 192MB	600 dpi/ Laser	12 cents color, 2 cents black	Overall the fastest performer; great price; excellent MarkVision remote administration software; sharpest text and smooth colors.	Some banding in color output.	★★★★★ This printer can handle whatever your busy office throws at it, and the price is right.
Hewlett-Packard Color LaserJet 5M (800) 752-0900	$5,199	2.5-ppm color, 10-ppm black	36MB/ 76MB	300 dpi/ Laser	5 cents color, 2 cents black	Sharp text; easy setup; outstanding JetAdmin management features; supports tabloid paper.	300-dpi resolution makes for so-so image quality; huge, outdated console design; pricey.	★★★★ It's worth the money to keep your network administrator happy.
QMS magicolor 2CX Print System (800) 523-2696 *InfoLink No. 608*	$3,699	4-ppm color, 16-ppm black	66MB/ 384MB	600 dpi/ Laser	9 cents color, 2 cents black	Fast monochrome engine makes for sizzling text speeds; the best image quality of the bunch; excellent network support; great price; highly expandable.	Slow performance with Adobe Photoshop.	★★★★ Cranks out the text with no trouble, and it's affordable too.
Minolta Color PageWorks PS (201) 512-5800 *InfoLink No. 609*	$3,299	3-ppm color, 12-ppm black	20MB/ 68MB	600 dpi/ Laser	11 cents color, 2 cents black	Least expensive of the group; 650-sheet paper capacity; smooth graphics.	Could use a memory boost; text not overly sharp; magenta overtones in graphics.	★★★★ A price that's easy on the bottom line.
Tektronix Phaser 360 (800) 835-6100 *InfoLink No. 610*	$3,695	6-ppm color, 6-ppm black	24MB/ 48MB	800 by 450 dpi/ Solid ink	9 cents color, free black	Rich black colors; fast presentation performance; free black ink for the life of your printer; good price; no-mess solid ink.	Prints text at a snail's pace; long wake-up times; dithering in images; fuzzy text; output not as durable as laser's.	★★★ Slow text hinders network performance, but a solid choice for groups with heavy color printing needs.
Xerox DocuPrint C55 (800) 349-3769 *InfoLink No. 611*	$3,500	3-ppm color, 12-ppm black	24MB/ 64MB	600 dpi/ Laser	8 cents color, 2 cents black	Great value; crisp and dark text.	Lacks remote administration capabilities; poor performance; lots of dithering detracts from images.	★★★ Love the price tag and the text output, but not the image quality.
Panasonic KX-P8410N Color Laser Printer (800) 742-8086 *InfoLink No. 612*	$5,399	3.5-ppm color, 14-ppm black	72MB/ 72MB	1,200 dpi/ Laser	8 cents color, 3 cents black	Highest capacity at 850 sheets; compact design; 1,200 dpi; blazing Photoshop performance.	GDI printing sucks resources from the server CPU; lacks strong remote-administration features; expensive; sluggish performance; mediocre image and text quality.	★★ Little bang for the buck.

[1]FOR MORE INFORMATION, GO TO WWW.PCCOMPUTING.COM/INFOLINK. [2]ESTIMATED STREET PRICE. [3]VENDOR SPECIFICATIONS. [4]VENDOR SPECIFICATIONS; COST REFLECTS 5 PERCENT COVERAGE FOR BLACK, 15 PERCENT COVERAGE FOR COLOR.

★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

YOUR **brain** USES ONLY A **fraction** OF ITS CAPACITY.



WE THINK YOUR **hard disk** SHOULD BE A BIT MORE **efficient** THAN THAT.

UP TO **40%** OF YOUR HARD DISK MAY BE **wasted space.** RECLAIM IT WITH **PartitionMagic® 3.0!**

PC manufacturers typically ship hard disks formatted with one large partition. You know it as the C: drive. Without repartitioning, that drive uses large, inefficient storage units or clusters to store your data. The result is that up to 40% of your hard disk's capacity can be totally wasted. PartitionMagic lets you solve that problem by dividing your hard disk into smaller, more efficient and better organized partitions. Up to hundreds of megabytes of wasted disk space can be reclaimed quickly and easily. It's a no-brainer. For more information, visit our web site at: **www.powerquest.com.**

"How much extra space did I get on my hard drive? Would you believe 108 megabytes? Hiawatha Bray, ***Boston Globe***

"PartitionMagic ... not only gives you more space for data, but lets you manage your data better." Jim Sundeen, ***PC Today***

BUY NOW $15 CASH BACK

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Electronics Boutique • Fry's • J&R • Micro Center • Office Depot • Software Etc.

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POWER® PQ QUEST

Shared or Solo?

There's no doubt you can afford to put a color printer in your office. So now the big question is, should you get a personal printer or one you can share? Network color printers cost a lot more than personal ink jets, but they also serve multiple users and have lower long-term costs—11 vs. 17 cents per page.

So consider a printer's return on investment and how you'll use it. If most of your printing is black text, such as for interoffice memos and quick business letters on corporate stationery, you're better served going with a network color printer. Individuals who use more than just occasional spot color are better off with their very own ink jet. Speeds are a bit slower, so you don't have to worry about tying up the network when you need to print your 20-page presentation.

For the best low-price personal color printer, nothing compares to the $399 Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 890C. Speed counts, and the DeskJet 890C doesn't disappoint. Output looks great, too, even on low-quality plain paper. Budget users should consider the $179 Epson Stylus Color 400, which is speedy with graphics, but less impressive when it comes to basic text printing.

And if you want to get the most out of a printer, opt for the Canon BJC-7004 Photo. Its text speed and output are strong, and you can't beat its bundled Canon Creative software, which gives you the tools to make everything from T-shirts to calendars.

To meet the needs of a workgroup, the clear choice is the Lexmark Optra SC 1275n. It's affordable, it has powerful networking capabilities, it's fast, and the output looks great. Hewlett-Packard's Color LaserJet 5M wins in the usability category for its well-designed front control panels, easy-to-use remote and network administration software, and paper-handling information. The QMS magicolor 2CX is also feature-packed and easy on the wallet—just what every business needs.

If you've been holding off on buying a color printer because it's too expensive, you're out of excuses. Now you just need to decide if you'll get one to share, or keep it all to yourself.

Performance testing was performed by LULIT BEZUAYEHU, JULI DAVIS, *and* IBRAHIM GUL.

DECISION MAKER

CHOOSE THE BEST **COLOR PRINTER** FOR YOUR NEEDS

1 Choose the factor that's most important.	2 Choose the next most important factor.	3 What else is important?	4 For your needs, the best printer to buy is . . .
Print Quality	Price	Personal	Canon BJC-7004 Photo
		Network	Lexmark Optra SC 1275n
	Performance	Personal	Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 890C
		Network	Lexmark Optra SC 1275n
Price	Print Quality	Personal	Epson Stylus Color 400
		Network	Lexmark Optra SC 1275n
	Performance	Personal	Epson Stylus Color 400
		Network	Minolta Color PageWorks PS
Performance	Print Quality	Personal	Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 890C
		Network	Lexmark Optra SC 1275n
	Price	Personal	Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 890C
		Network	Lexmark Optra SC 1275n

ATTENTION READERS:
BY VIEWING THE NEXT FEW PAGES YOU WILL BE EXPOSING YOURSELF TO INFORMATION THAT WILL FOREVER CHANGE THE WAY YOU LOOK AT MICRON.

A TRUE DESKTOP REPLACEMENT YOU CAN ACTUALLY AFFORD

TransPort VLx Jan 98 | TransPort XKE Oct 97 | TransPort XKE Feb 98

Enjoy Big Color
- a giant 13.3" or 12.1" TFT active matrix display
- powered by 128-bit graphics accelerator

Everything You Need
Modular Bay that accepts variable 20X CD-ROM drive & 3.5" floppy (both included) or an optional second Lithium-Ion battery ($179)

Awesome Audio
- Stereo Speakers
- Wavetable/3D Surround Sound

Jump on the Net with an optional speedy 56K* modem ($149)

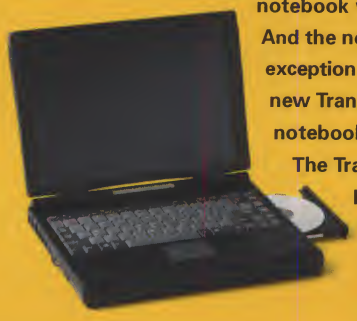
TransPort Trek is thin and light at as little as 6.2 lbs and 1.7" thin

Powered by the 233 or 266MHz mobile Pentium® processor with MMX™ technology

THE NEW TRANSPORT TREK – RANKED #1 BY PC WORLD

"The TransPort Trek is the fastest budget notebook we've run through our mill"
-PC World, Ranked #1 April '98††

Geeks, experts and industry pundits all agree that Micron makes the world's best notebooks. We've won the coveted *PC Magazine's* Editors' Choice Award for practically every notebook we've ever released. And the new TransPort Trek is no exception. *PC World* just ranked the new TransPort Trek the #1 budget notebook available today. The TransPort Trek is the single best desktop replacement notebook you can buy.



TransPort Trek Apr 98

TransPort® Trek™

Common Features on all TransPort Systems:

- 512KB L2 pipeline burst cache
- PCI bus with 128-bit graphics accelerator
- USB, parallel, serial, VGA, PS/2, ports
- S-Video Out; MPEG compatible
- CardBus and Zoomed Video ready
- Wavetable/3D Positional sound
- Microphone, stereo line-in & line-out jacks
- 2 Type II or 1 Type III PCMCIA slots
- 20X modular CD-ROM drive
- 2-way infrared port
- Touchpad pointing device
- Modular floppy drive
- Li-Ion battery
- Choice of Portable Software Solutions Pak
- Microsoft® Windows® 95 and Microsoft Plus!
- 5-year/1-year Micron limited warranty

Trek 233	Trek 233	Trek 266
• 233MHz Intel Pentium processor with MMX technology • 32MB EDO RAM • 2.1GB hard drive • 12.1" SVGA TFT display	• 233MHz Intel Pentium processor with MMX technology • 32MB EDO RAM • 2.1GB hard drive • 13.3" XGA TFT display • Microsoft Office Small Business Edition	• 266MHz Intel Pentium processor with MMX technology • 32MB EDO RAM • 3.2GB hard drive • 13.3" XGA TFT display • Microsoft Office Small Business Edition
$1,999	**$2,499**	**$2,699**
Bus. Lease $70/mo	Bus. Lease $87/mo	Bus. Lease $92/mo

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THE ONLY NOTEBOOK WITH UP TO 11 HOURS OF POWER

Presentation Perfection
GoBook features full S-Video Out as well as Super VGA display and NTSC video ports

Big Active Matrix Display
- 12.1" SVGA active matrix display
- Powered by 128-bit graphics accelerator

Get connected to your network or peripherals with the optional Micron GoDock™ ($199)

Exclusive Programmable GoKeys™

Big Room for Expandability
Modular bay that accepts variable 24X CD-ROM drive & a 3.5" floppy (both included); and up to 3 hour bay battery (included)

CALL and ask about our WINDOWS 98 UPGRADE OFFER

Micron™ GoBook™ is just 1.35" thin and weighs as little as 4.4lbs

Powered by the 233MHz or 266MHz Pentium® processor with MMX™ technology

Modular battery design allows 3, 8 or up to 11 hours of operation

MICRON ELECTRONICS™

THE NEW MICRON GOBOOK – JUST 1.35" THIN & 4.4 LBS

"The GoBook is the notebook by which all others will be measured in 1998!"

Thanks to GoBook, you don't have to compromise anymore. Now you can have a notebook with insane battery life, top performance, all the features and a cool, thin, lightweight form factor in a notebook that transforms to meet your needs - whether you're heading across town or across the Pacific. Starting at just 1.35" thin and weighing just 4.4lbs - the GoBook is the perfect notebook for the mobile professional. With its innovative modular battery design, the GoBook offers up to 11 hours of power.

GoBook

Common Features on All GoBook Systems:

- 4.4 lbs (w/floppy)
- 6.7 lbs (w/opt./base battery & floppy)
- 512K L2 pipeline burst cache
- 12.1" SVGA display
- PCI bus with 128-bit graphics
- USB, parallel, serial, VGA, PS/2, NTSC/S-Video, ports
- S-Video Out; MPEG compatible
- CardBus/Zoomed Video ready
- 16 bit stereo/Wavetable sound
- Microphone, stereo line in/out jacks
- 24X modular CD-ROM drive
- 2 Type II or 1 Type III PCMCIA slots
- 2-way infrared port
- Touchpad pointing device
- Modular floppy drive
- Norton Anti-Virus & System Wizard
- Microsoft® Windows® 95 and Microsoft Plus!
- 5-year/1-year Micron limited warranty*

GoBook 233	GoBook 233	GoBook 266
• 233MHz Intel Pentium processor with MMX technology • 32MB EDO RAM • 2.1GB hard drive • Bay battery	• 233MHz Intel Pentium processor with MMX technology • 32MB EDO RAM • 2.1GB hard drive • Super Base battery • Bay battery • Microsoft Office Small Business Edition	• 266MHz Intel Pentium processor with MMX technology • 32MB EDO RAM • 2.1GB hard drive • Super Base battery • Bay battery • Microsoft Office Small Business Edition
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INTRODUCING THE NEW 400MHZ MILLENNIA

(OKAY GEEKS, START YOUR PROPELLERS)

32X Variable CD-ROM
Or upgrade to DVD-ROM***

Lots of monitor options including the 17" Micron 700 FGx, .26 dp monitor (16" display)

"Power users will love the new Micron Millennia"
- PC Magazine

Expandable Storage
Integrated 100MB Iomega Zip drive

Awesome Sound!
64 voice PCI Wavetable stereo sound speakers with powered subwoofer upgrade

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350MHz & 400MHz systems feature the new Intel BX chip set with fast 100MHz bus

Features new Pentium® II 350MHz or 400MHz processors

Technology freaks unite. The Millennia® 400 is a multimedia dream machine. Whether you have big ideas for audio, video, publishing or are in the market for the ultimate gaming machine, there's no system more ideal for what you need and no system more ready to meet your needs in the future. The Micron™ Millennia desktop line, long a favorite among industry pundits and experts, offers the latest in technology all at factory direct prices that lead the industry.

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MICRON - RANKED #1 IN TOTAL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION BY THE READERS OF PC WEEK

Micron is so popular among the tech savvy set that the readers of *PC Week* just voted Micron #1 in overall customer satisfaction. Four out of five PC geeks (the fifth probably just builds their own) prefer Micron because they recognize Micron's engineering driven, award-winning product focus is unmatched in the PC industry. They also know that Micron systems are the most dependable. Micron uses the finest quality components that are backed up by our responsive and knowledgeable tech support and sales force – all at prices that you wouldn't expect to find from a top-tier $2 billion direct systems manufacturer.

Millennia 333

- Intel 333MHz Pentium II processor
- 32MB SDRAM
- 4.0GB Ultra ATA hard drive
- 17" Micron 700FGx, .26dp monitor (16"display)
- 82440LX chip set
- 512KB internal cache, 2MB flash BIOS
- 3.5" floppy drive
- 32X EIDE variable speed CD-ROM drive
- 128-bit AGP Diamond Viper V330 (nVidia), 4MB EDO SGRAM & MPEG
- Integrated 32-voice wavetable 3D stereo sound
- Advent AV009 stereo speakers
- 56K x2 data/fax modem*
- 104-key enhanced keyboard
- Microsoft® IntelliMouse™
- Microsoft Windows® 95 and Microsoft Plus!
- Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition
- 5-year/3-year Micron Power[sm] limited warranty

$2,099
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- 64MB SDRAM
- 6.4GB Ultra ATA hard drive
- Integrated 100MB Iomega Zip drive / 3.5" floppy drive
- DVD-ROM drive and PCI decoder card***

$2,496
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Millennia 350

- Intel 350MHz Pentium II processor
- 32MB PC100 SDRAM
- 4.0GB Ultra ATA hard drive
- 17" Micron 700FGx, .26dp monitor (16"display)
- 82440BX chip set
- 512KB internal cache, 2MB flash BIOS
- 3.5" floppy drive
- 32X EIDE variable speed CD-ROM drive
- 128-bit AGP Diamond Viper V330 (nVidia), 4MB EDO SGRAM & MPEG
- Integrated 64-voice wavetable 3D stereo sound
- Advent AV009 stereo speakers
- 56K x2 data/fax modem*
- 104-key enhanced keyboard
- Microsoft IntelliMouse
- Microsoft Windows 95 and Microsoft Plus!
- Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition
- 5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty

$2,299
Bus. Lease $80/mo

- 64MB PC100 SDRAM
- 8.4GB Ultra ATA hard drive
- Integrated 100MB Iomega Zip drive / 3.5" floppy drive
- DVD-ROM drive and PCI decoder card***

$2,745
Bus. Lease $94/mo

Millennia 400

- Intel 400MHz Pentium II processor
- 32MB PC100 SDRAM
- 4.0GB Ultra ATA hard drive
- 17" Micron 700FGx, .26dp monitor (16"display)
- 82440BX chip set
- 512KB internal cache, 2MB flash BIOS
- 3.5" floppy drive
- 32X EIDE variable speed CD-ROM drive
- 128-bit AGP Diamond Viper V330 (nVidia), 4MB EDO SGRAM & MPEG
- Integrated 64-voice wavetable 3D stereo sound
- Advent AV009 stereo speakers
- 56K x2 data/fax modem*
- 104-key enhanced keyboard
- Microsoft IntelliMouse
- Microsoft Windows 95 and Microsoft Plus!
- Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition
- 5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty

$2,499
Bus. Lease $87/mo

- 64MB PC100 SDRAM
- 8.4GB Ultra ATA hard drive
- Integrated 100MB Iomega Zip drive / 3.5" floppy drive
- DVD-ROM drive and PCI decoder card***

$2,945
Bus. Lease $101/mo

MMX™ intel inside pentium® II PROCESSOR

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MICRON ELECTRONICS™

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YOU DON'T NEED CLEVER HEADLINES. YOU JUST NEED A SERVER THAT YOU CAN COUNT ON.

"Micron's dual-processor...server runs full steam ahead."
-PC Computing

Small Business Server Solution
- Easy-to-use, simple-to-set-up, total small business server solution

Embedded RAID
- I_2O Ready scalable RAID solution

Dual Pentium® II processor capable

10 Hot-swap Hard Drives
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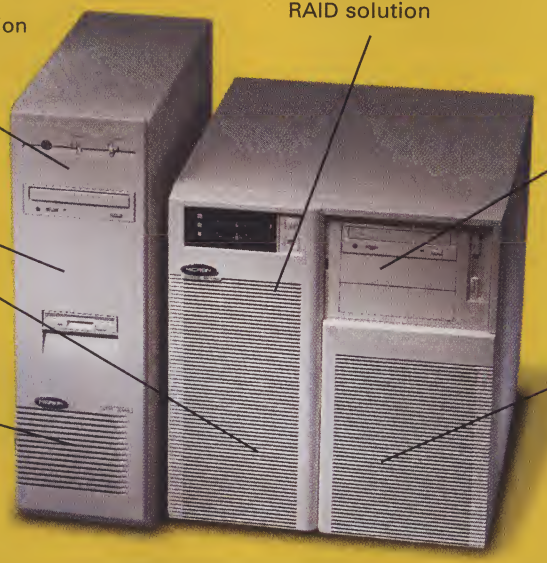
- Maximum up time through hard drive redundancy
- Scalable solution



Fully Integrated
- Ultra-wide SCSI
- 10/100 network adapter
- SVGA video

N+1 Redundant Hot-Swap Power Supplies
- Maximum up time through power supply redundancy
- 2+1 (3 total) 360 Watt each power supply option

MMX™ intel inside pentium® II PROCESSOR

Take away the catchy headline. Forget the cute bovine mascot. Ignore the jingle that sticks in your head and look at the product. Look at how it's built, what it costs and how it's supported. That's what really matters, and since 1985 that's all we've focused on. Perhaps that's why Micron was just ranked first among all PC vendors in customer satisfaction by *PC Week* readers. We invite you to compare the numbers for yourself because a better server is the only thing you should be buying.

TO ORDER CALL TOLL-FREE **800-286-9061** OR ONLINE AT **www.micronpc.com**

THE NEW NETFRAME 3100 SETS A NEW STANDARD FOR ENTRY-LEVEL PC SERVERS.

While fully loaded systems aren't always needed at first, the ability for a server to grow as your business grows is critical. The new NetFRAME® 3100 provides that upgrade path. It incorporates mid-range features like hot swap hard drives, convenient remote management technology and a highly integrated motherboard. It also features the 440BX chip set -- Intel's latest chip set technology supporting 100MHz front side bus and 100MHz SDRAM. Combined with the fastest processors available, this server offers networked businesses the performance of a dependable mid-range server at an entry-level price.

NetFRAME LV2000
Small Business Server Edition

- Intel 233MHz Pentium II processor
- Dual processor capable
- 64MB ECC SDRAM
- 4GB Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 hard drive
- Microsoft® Small Business Server 4.0 (10 user license)
- NOS support (3 first-year incident resolutions), 7x24
- 512KB integrated L2 ECC cache
- 5 expansion slots: 4 PCI, 1 ISA
- Integrated Adaptec PCI Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 controller
- Intel EtherExpress Pro 100 network adapter
- 56Kbps x2 US Robotics modem*
- Upgradable to 36GB storage
- 32X EIDE CD-ROM drive
- Intel LANDesk® Server Manager
- Dedicated server technical support, 7x24
- 5-year/3-year Micron Power℠ limited warranty
- 1-year next-business-day on-site service**

$4,032
Bus. Lease $128/mo

NetFRAME 3100

- Intel 350MHz Pentium II processor
- Dual processor capable
- 64MB ECC 100MHz SDRAM
- 4GB Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 hard drive
- Microsoft® Windows NT® Server 4.0 (10 user license)
- NOS support (3 first-year incident resolutions), 7x24
- Intel 440BX PCI chip set
- 512KB integrated L2 ECC cache
- 100MHz front side Bus
- Integrated Symbios Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 dual channel controller
- RAID capable
- 5 expansion slots: 3 PCI, 1 ISA, 1 shared PCI/ISA
- 8 drive bays: 1 external 3.5", 2 external 5.25"
- 5 hot-swap hard drive bays
- 32X EIDE CD-ROM drive
- Integrated SVGA graphics (2MB)
- Integrated Intel 10/100 Ethernet
- Intel LANDesk Server Manager
- Dedicated server technical support, 7x24
- 5-year/3-year Micron Power limited warranty
- 1-year next-business-day on-site service**

$4,299
Bus. Lease $136/mo

NetFRAME MV5000

- Intel 233MHz Pentium II processor
- Dual processor capable
- 64MB ECC SDRAM
- 4GB Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 hard drive
- Microsoft Windows NT Server 4.0 (10 user license)
- NOS support (3 first-year incident resolutions), 7x24
- 512KB integrated L2 ECC cache
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PC Accessories

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PDA Pal Your notebook isn't the only thing that needs protection. Secure your handheld PC in a smart-looking wallet from Curtis Computer Products (above right). Now your handheld PC, PC Cards, money, credit cards, receipts, and pens can live in one place. You can even use your handheld PC while it's in the case. The wallet comes in two sizes to hold everything from a 3Com PalmPilot to a Hewlett-Packard Windows CE handheld PC ($30 est. street price; 800-272-2366). . . .

Light the Way
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Portable Printing Your notebook gives you the freedom to work anywhere, but what about printing? You can't exactly hook up a printer at the beach—unless it's a Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 340Cbi. This battery-powered portable color printer lets you print 3 ppm (black text) at 600 by 300 dpi. You don't need cables—just aim your notebook at the printer's infrared port. The DeskJet 340Cbi works as far as 3 feet away. There's also a rechargeable battery pack so you won't run out of juice on the road—or the beach. ($300 est. street price; 800-752-0900).

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Top Pick: The Olympus D-500L delivers terrific picture quality and gives you all the tools you need.

Olympus D-500L / Olympus America / (800) 347-4027 / $799 est. street price / *Enter 926 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

We tested five new digital cameras that are well suited for the home and small office: the Olympus D-500L, the Agfa ePhoto 1280, the Hewlett-Packard PhotoSmart C20, the Sony Digital Mavica MVC-FD7, and the Polaroid PDC 300. All include miniature color LCD screens that let you view your images seconds after pressing the shutter release, and most let you transfer your digital images via a cable to your PC. (The Sony Digital Mavica stores images on a built-in floppy disk.) The cameras also include image-editing software.

The Pro's Pick

Olympus' D-500L is our top pick in this tightly contested roundup. This $799 camera captures images at resolutions of up to 1,024 by 768 pixels—second only to the Agfa and the Hewlett-Packard cameras, which have top resolutions that are slightly higher. But it was the clarity and crispness of the D-500L's photos that won us over: Its images were clearly superior to those of the other cameras in our roundup.

A noteworthy feature of the D-500L is its optical viewfinder, identical to those on film cameras. Only one other camera we tested—the Hewlett-Packard PhotoSmart C20—has an optical viewfinder; with the others you have to use the LCD screen to frame shots. This matters, because shooting from the LCD is awkward and drains batteries.

We also liked the D-500L's 3X zoom lens, which is great for close-ups, as well as its pop-up flash. And you can use the D-500L's parallel cable to print directly to an Olympus P-300 printer. Surprisingly, the D-500L doesn't include an AC adapter, something you'd expect from a camera in this price range. But its excellent image quality makes it tops in every other way.

Take a Spin: The ePhoto 1280's camcorder-like design lets you swivel the lens away from the camera body.

ePhoto 1280 / Agfa / (888) 281-2302 / $899 est. street price / *Enter 927 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Roving Eye The Agfa ePhoto 1280 looks more like a miniature camcorder than a 35mm camera. The lens swivels away from the camera base, letting you take pictures from a variety of angles. Unlike the Olympus D-500L, which has a few too many buttons, the ePhoto 1280 is as easy as point and shoot. To take a picture, just press a button. We also liked the ePhoto 1280's detailed 1,280 by 960 resolution—the highest in this roundup.

Zoom, Please: The PhotoSmart C20 is well made and easy to use. Unfortunately, it lacks a zoom feature—a must-have for close-up shots.

PhotoSmart C20 / Hewlett-Packard / (888) 474-3867 / $699 est. street price

Unfortunately, the ePhoto 1280's image quality didn't measure up to its resolution. Its pictures weren't as sharp as those of the Olympus D-500L; the colors were washed-out and less vibrant. An optical viewfinder for framing shots would be handy—particularly on a camera that costs $899. But to its credit, the ePhoto 1280 comes with rechargeable nickel–metal hydride batteries and a recharger. And like the Olympus D-500L, it has a 3X zoom lens.

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Built-in Floppy: The Digital Mavica MVC-FD7 includes an integrated floppy drive. Clever, but not faster.

Digital Mavica MVC-FD7 / Sony Electronics / (800) 222-7669 / $700 est. street price / *Enter 928 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

Overall, though, the ePhoto 1280 isn't the best choice for top-notch digital photos.

Zoom-Free The $699 Hewlett-Packard PhotoSmart C20 has a lot going for it: Its svelte, compact case is easy to grasp and carry, it includes a viewfinder for framing shots, and its lens cover slides across the front so you'll never lose it. And PhotoSmart C20's 1,152 by 872 resolution was the second highest in the roundup.

Its Achilles' heel? This otherwise excellent camera lacks a zoom feature, which should be de rigueur on a camera that costs more than $500. Zoom-envy aside, the PhotoSmart C20 captured quality images—second only to those of the winning Olympus D-500L. In addition, the PhotoSmart C20 manuals are terrific, providing clear, concise advice on how to get started.

Easy Transfer Sony's Digital Mavica MVC-FD7 wins major points for originality. The Digital Mavica has a built-in floppy drive so you don't need to transfer images to your PC via a serial cable. Just save them on a floppy disk (up to 40 images in standard mode), then insert the disk into your desktop PC.

While we applaud the ingenuity of Sony's engineers, it's an odd mix of cutting-edge (digital camera) and antiquated (floppy drive) technologies. Floppy disks are notoriously flimsy, and ejecting a floppy disk and opening it in a desktop PC is only slightly faster than using a serial cable to transfer photos. However, the Digital Mavica's 10X zoom lens is impressive, and its 640-by-480 images are decent, if not stellar. Still, you can do better.

Penny Saver The least expensive camera we tested was Polaroid's $299 PDC 300. This camera has clearly marked buttons and a built-in flash. Like the other

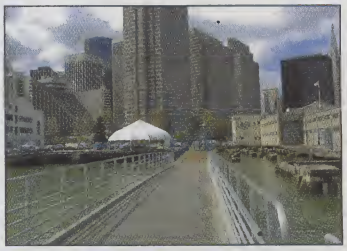
Budget Conscious: The Polaroid PDC 300 is inexpensive but lacks key features, and its images are mediocre.

Polaroid PDC 300 / Polaroid / (800) 343-5000 / $299 est. street price / *Enter 929 at www.pccomputing.com/infolink*

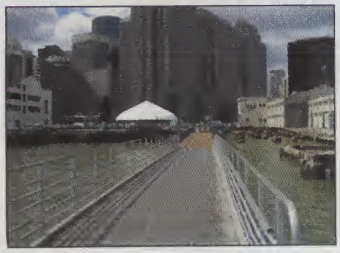
SIDE BY SIDE HOW PICTURE QUALITY COMPARES

Digital cameras are improving by leaps and bounds every year. Color and resolution that we wouldn't have thought possible last year are standard issue with today's cameras. Image quality is subjective, but look for natural colors and few visible pixels in your digital photos.

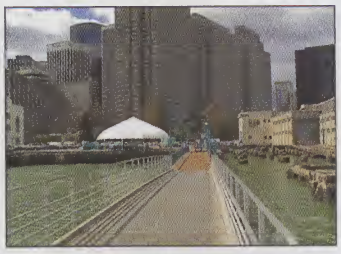
Olympus D-500L: The high resolution and crisp, close-to-film–quality of the Olympus's images were the best in this class.



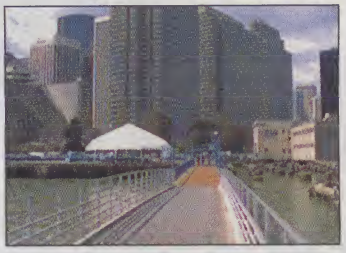
Agfa ePhoto 1280: The image quality is impressive overall, but despite the high resolution, colors are washed-out and sallow.



Hewlett-Packard PhotoSmart C20: Even with a higher resolution than the Olympus, the PhotoSmart's colors are darker and less vivid.



Sony Digital Mavica MVC-FD7: The floppy drive is handy, but the Digital Mavica's images are low-res and appear washed-out.



Polaroid PDC 300: The images don't compare to those of the more-expensive models, but they're not bad for the price.

Digital Cameras

	Agfa ePhoto 1280	Hewlett-Packard PhotoSmart C20	Olympus D-500L	Polaroid PDC 300	Sony Digital Mavica
Highest Resolution	1,280 by 960	1,152 by 872	1,024 by 768	320 by 240	640 by 480
Storage Device	Removable flash memory card	Removable flash memory card	Removable SmartMedia card	Flash memory (not upgradable)	Floppy disk
Zoom	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Optical Viewfinder	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

cameras, it ships with simple image-editing software. Unfortunately, the PDC 300 doesn't have a viewfinder or a zoom lens—and it captures images at an unimpressive 320 by 240 pixels. We were also disappointed by the PDC 300's grainy and drab image quality.

That said, $299 is a super price for a digital camera. Although the PDC 300 isn't in the same league as the other cameras, it's acceptable if you want to simply send photos via e-mail or post images to a personal Web page. But small-business users should spend the extra money for a top-notch digital camera with superior resolution, image clarity, and color reproduction.

Photo Picks If you plan to go digital, buy the best camera you can afford. The best in this bunch is the $799 Olympus D-500L, with its great image quality and full-feature set. The Agfa ePhoto 1280 and Hewlett-Packard PhotoSmart C20 have many noteworthy features, but their photos don't match the D-500L's. While the Sony Digital Mavica MVC-FD7's built-in floppy drive is unique, its images are average. And the Polaroid PDC 300 is a fine camera for home users, but it lacks the features and image clarity that business users need. JEFF BERTOLUCCI

DECISION MAKER

WHICH **DIGITAL CAMERA** IS FOR YOU?

Lab notes

We tested each digital camera by taking a variety of pictures indoors and outdoors at the cameras' highest-quality settings. For landscape and still-life images, we checked for image clarity and accurate color reproduction. For flesh tones, we snapped a series of facial close-ups. We then transferred the images to a 400MHz Pentium II PC and compared the photos side by side.

Each camera came with image-editing and photo-transfer software. We installed the applications on the test PC and used the image-editing apps for simple photo touchups like changing brightness or cropping edges.

We then examined specific features such as zoom, autoflash, and macro (for close-ups) options. We rated the camera controls for ease of use and compared their built-in LCD screens, inspecting whether they worked well in indoor and outdoor lighting. Finally, if the camera had removable storage—like a flash memory card or a floppy drive—we removed and reinserted the storage device to see how simple and intuitive the procedure was.

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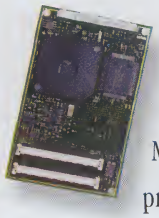

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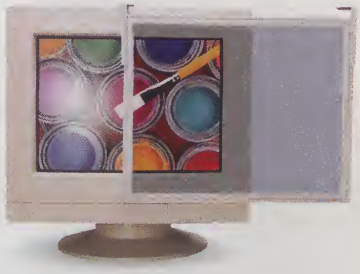

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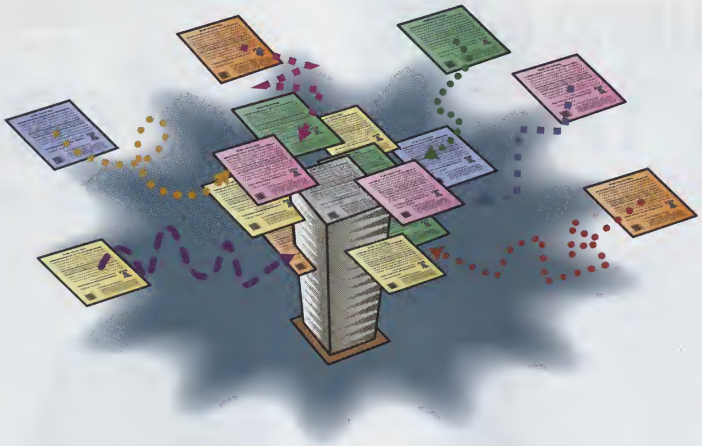

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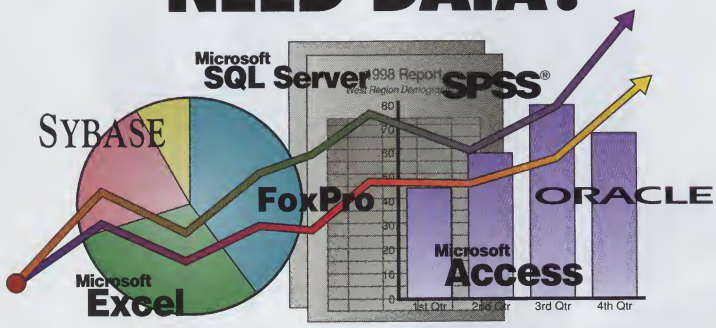

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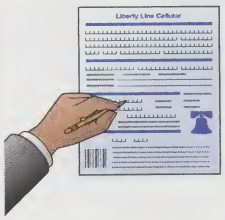

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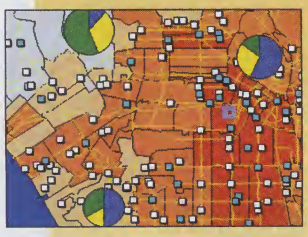

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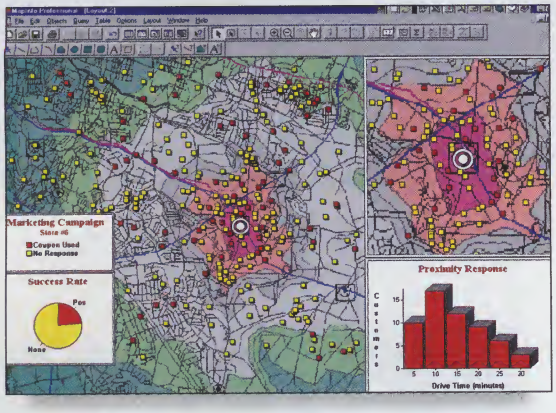

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InFocus	LitePro 730	1024 x 768	400	12 lbs.	no	remote mouse	1 years	no
Epson	Powerlight 700	1024 x 768	400	14.3 lbs.	no	remote	1 years	no
Proxima	9200	1024 x 768	500	14.1 lbs.	yes	remote mouse	1 years	no

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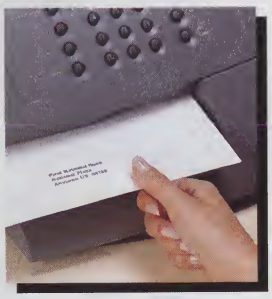

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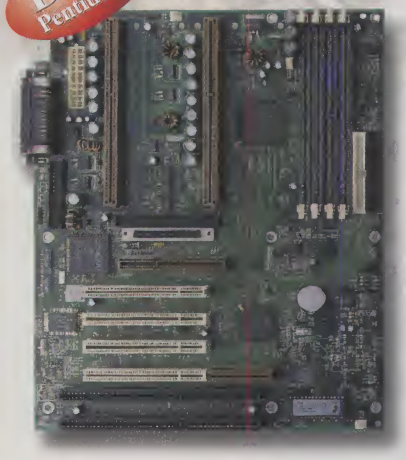

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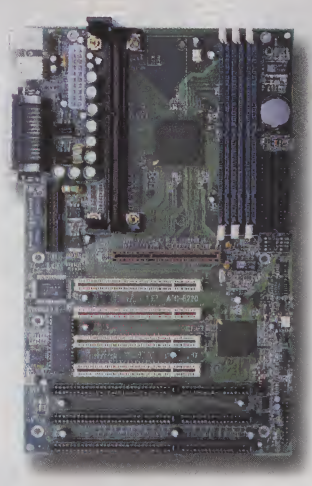

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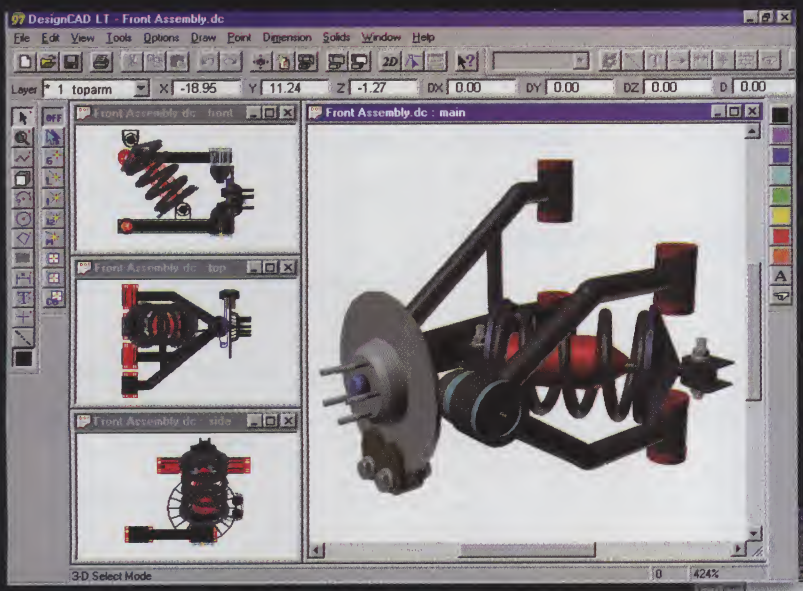

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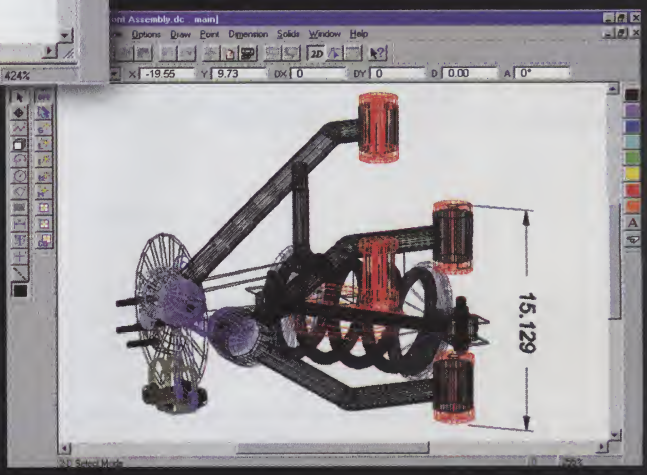

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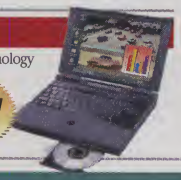

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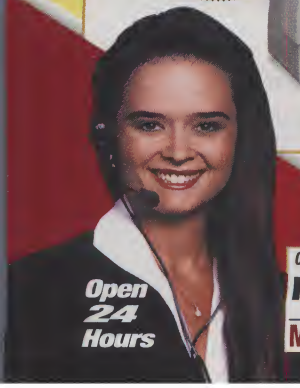

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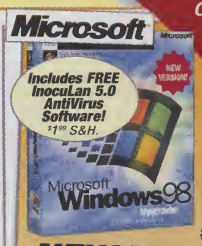

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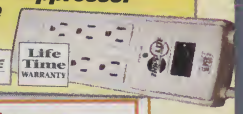

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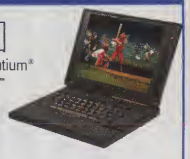

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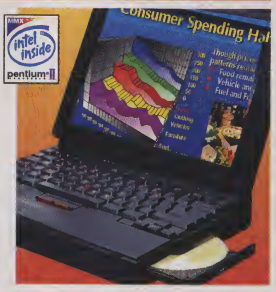

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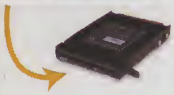

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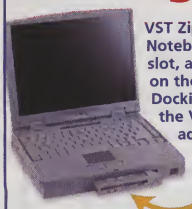

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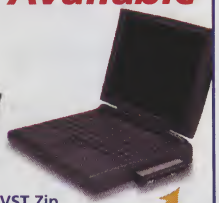

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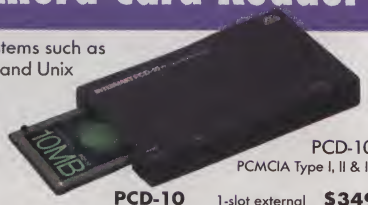

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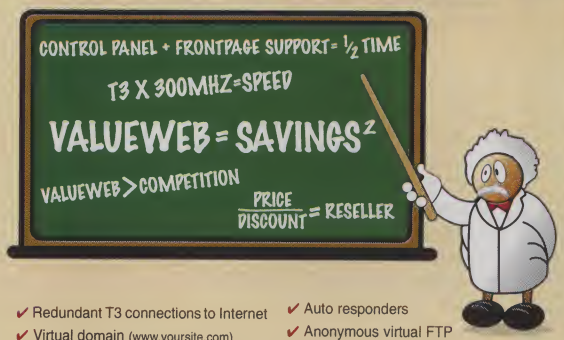

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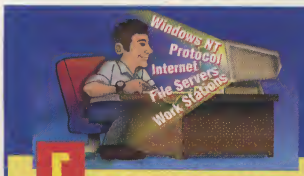

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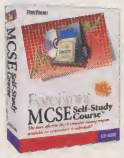

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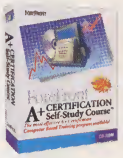

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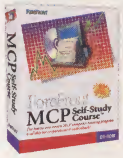

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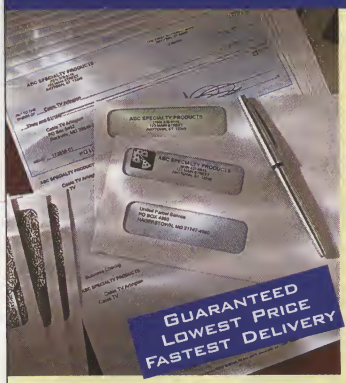

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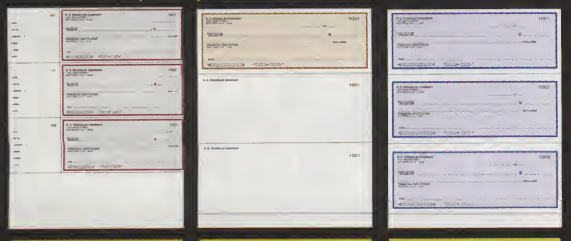

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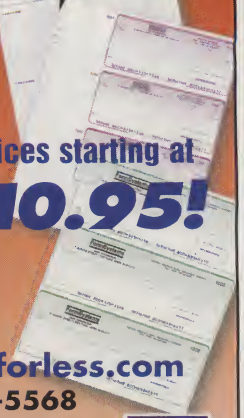

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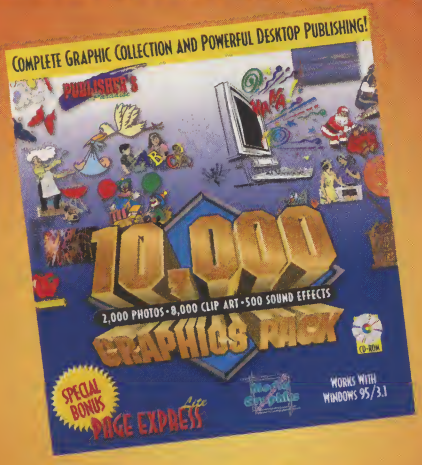

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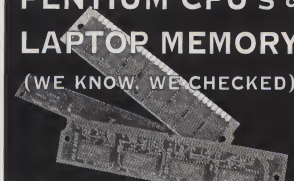

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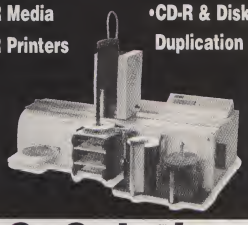

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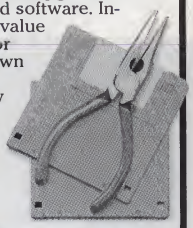

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Buried Treasure

I'm a download addict. I've neglected my job and my family to download scores of files that have remained for months, unzipped, on my hard drive. I've accumulated 332 files, including utilities, icons, and other stuff I'd otherwise never get around to using. Like Geraldo opening Capone's vault, I'll unzip the files in front of you. Who knows what we'll find?

My Fund's Bigger Than Your Fund

★★★★★ Sure, *you* know you have a tidy sum stashed in high-performing mutual funds. But do the rest of the people in your office know you're a financial whiz? They will when you download After Dark Online. It's a screen saver, but instead of flying toasters you get a scrolling ticker tape that can be seen from six cubes away showing the prices and changes on your selection of stocks or mutual funds, plus news channels for sports, computing, business, and people.

After Dark Online

Icon, You Con, We All Con...Oh, Forget It

★★★ At IconCity you can be choosy, zapping down collections themed for folders, flowers, cars, war, sci-fi—you name it. Or you, too, can be a pig. Suck down BIG.ZIP—3,738 icons in a 4.04MB ZIP file that expands to a truly unmanageable size of 11MB. It took me 26 minutes just to unzip it on a hot-dog Pentium II. The zipper contains every little square picture that's ever graced a computer screen—everything from acdsee (say it out loud) to X-Men, with icons for Build-a-Woman, Japanese animation, and White Zombie in between. So how are you going to even look at *3,738 icons?* Well, I didn't know either, until I found the next download hidden at the back of my download vault.

IconCity

Master of Your Icon Domain

★★★ IconEdit Pro 4.01 has more power than most smart bombs. The 32-bit program has a goodly range of icon tools, including 256-color icons, animated cursors, and 3-D effects. It'll cost you 15 big ones if this is the icon creator of your dreams, and it'll nag you on launch and exit if you're cheap. Me, I'm still looking. If you don't have Visual Basic 5.0 runtime (I didn't, and felt quite slighted), then count on downloading a larger version of the file from the same site.

IconEdit Pro 4.01

Cool...No, Lukewarm

★ Here, at the back of my download vault, is CoolEdit 96. I have no idea what it's supposed to do, although from the name, it looks as if it's been hiding on my hard drive for a couple of years.

JUST THE FACTS

★★★★★ You don't have to be a wirehead to use TechFacts 95, but if you are the ultimate nerd, this is your ultimate toy. It's a Windows 95 utility that lets you peek into all the inner mysteries of your system. A lot of programs give you information on heaps and threads and other things you can easily live without knowing. But even if you're without any copper in your cranium, you'll like TechFacts' ability to save your CMOS settings to a file; to search for files and text strings, even within zipped files; and to track any changes made by installing new programs. But remember, TechFacts 95 is shareware—if you keep it, you owe $20. TechFacts 95

LIGHTS, CAMCORDER, CLICK!

★★★★★ So, you're the office computer guru—the guy everyone calls when they can't figure out how to use some software. Tired of giving the same spiel 20 times a week? Try Microsoft Camcorder. It records everything that happens when you type, move your mouse, or even click on a button. You can also record a voice narration to explain what you're doing. So the next time you're asked how to do something, give the novice an AVI file or a stand-alone executable that runs even if they don't have a copy of Camcorder. Microsoft claims it works only with Office 97, but I enticed it to record a few non-Microsoft programs. Camcorder and WordPerfect, however, didn't get along—one or the other always crashed. A coincidence, I'm sure. Microsoft Camcorder

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PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID PERRY. ILLUSTRATIONS BY ELIZABETH BRANDT, REGAN HONDA, MARC ROSENTHAL, AND SCOTT MATHEWS.

Let's unzip it and take a look. Oh, it's a sound editor. The one that comes with Windows is ridiculously underpowered. CoolEdit is supposed to let you transform sound files with any effect short of scat singing. It even has features for making your dog sing and creating brain-wave files to lull you to sleep. But I don't know what they're talking about because all I can get CoolEdit to do is bring on a case of terminal hourglass syndrome. Too bad. I'll have to look for some other way to waste time.
CoolEdit 96

Be a Hack

★★★★★ Here's a shareware program for the rebel in you—for the nonconformist who doesn't want Microsoft telling you how Windows should work. Many of the settings for Windows features are hidden among the treacherous byways of the Registry. WinHacker 95 2.0 lets you change the hidden features of Windows 95 and Windows NT. You can tweak everything, from how long it takes menus to pop up to the icons used for folders. You've got 20 days—plenty of time—to try it out before handing over the $18 registration.
WinHacker 95 2.0

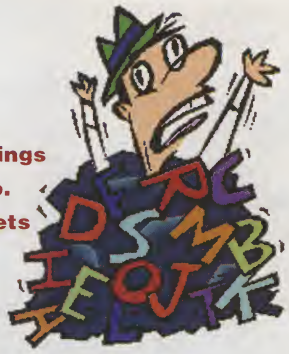
Lovely Meter Maid

★★ Here's one I unzipped and installed months ago. It's Starfish Internet Meter, a freebie download from the late Starfish Internet Utilities. I was looking for something that would tell me if one Internet provider was faster than another. Well, this ain't it. In fact, I'm not sure just what it is. The program installs a little black meter with red and green flashing lights and a couple of moving bar charts. What they're telling you is if your modem is receiving or sending data—for what purpose, I don't know.
Starfish Internet Meter

Ahhhh, Shuddup Already

★★★★ Here's a simple way to get out of doing all those boring housekeeping chores associated with computing. ShutUp automatically runs when you close Windows to delete files in the temp directory, clear selected history lists, eject CD-ROMs, and launch other utilities, such as a defragger or ScanDisk. It also makes for a handy appointment reminder. It's from Ziff-Davis, and because we're such generous folk, it's free.
ShutUp

ABSOLUTELY FONTULOUS



★★★★ My hard drive is littered with too many fonts. I now have 569 typefaces taking up space and slowing things up. Trouble is figuring out which to zap and which to keep. Fonter is the best shareware font manager you'll find. It lets you view and print TrueType and PostScript fonts, compare up to eight at a time, install fonts permanently or temporarily, and give you more details about your fonts than a sane person wants to know. The only hitch is that I can't find a way to delete fonts. Maybe it's there, maybe it's not. Well, I've got 30 days to find out before I have to fork over 20 bucks. Fonter

TAKE THIS E-MAIL AND STUFF IT

★★★★★ We've all received them: e-mail messages with files attached that expand into an alphabet soup. With StuffIt Expander, all you have to do is drag and drop the message to translate it to human language. Or you can use a quick addition to file dialog menus, a toolbar icon, or a keyboard shortcut. It also works as a handy expander for zipped and archived files, and it automatically deciphers files that have been put through multiple compression programs. It's a must for the complete e-mailer. Oh, and it's free. StuffIt Expander

By Ron White

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WinList Windows Magazine, *April '98*

Pentium 200 MMX "An office tool you'll respect."
PC Computing—PC Computing, *May '98*

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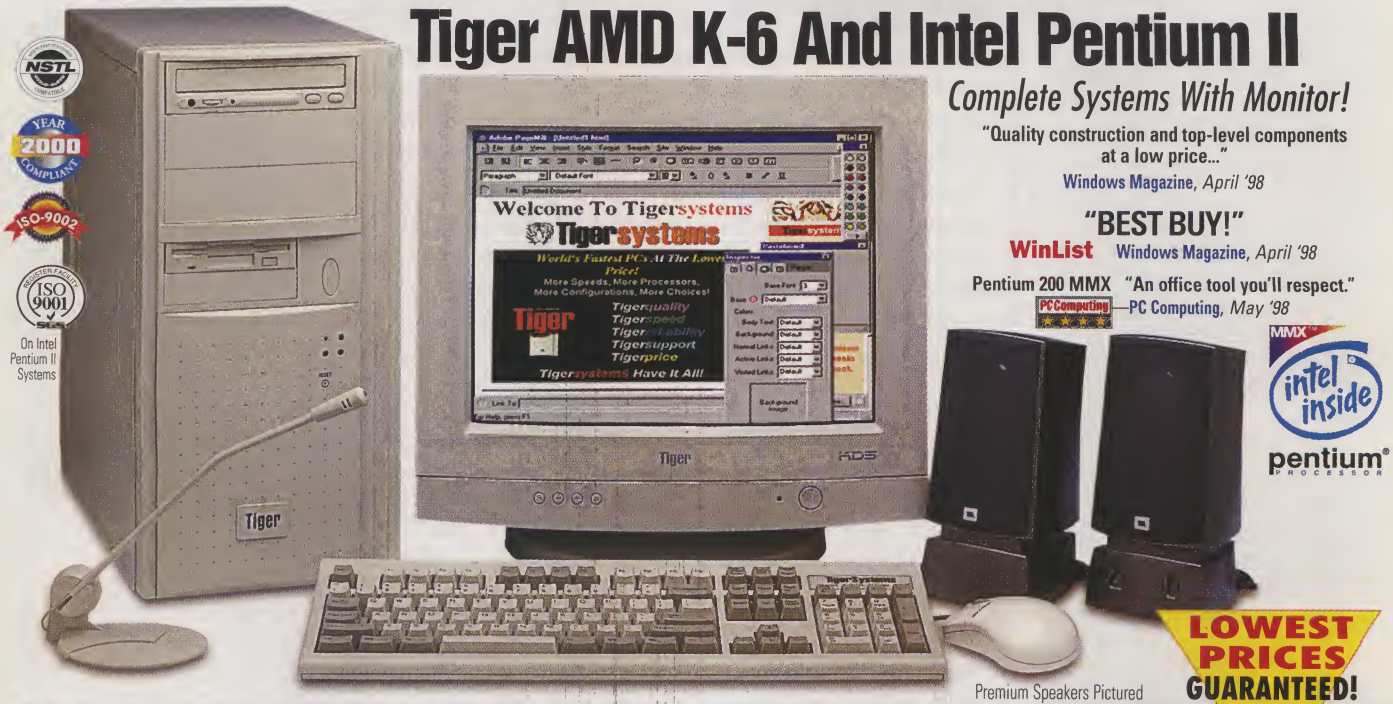

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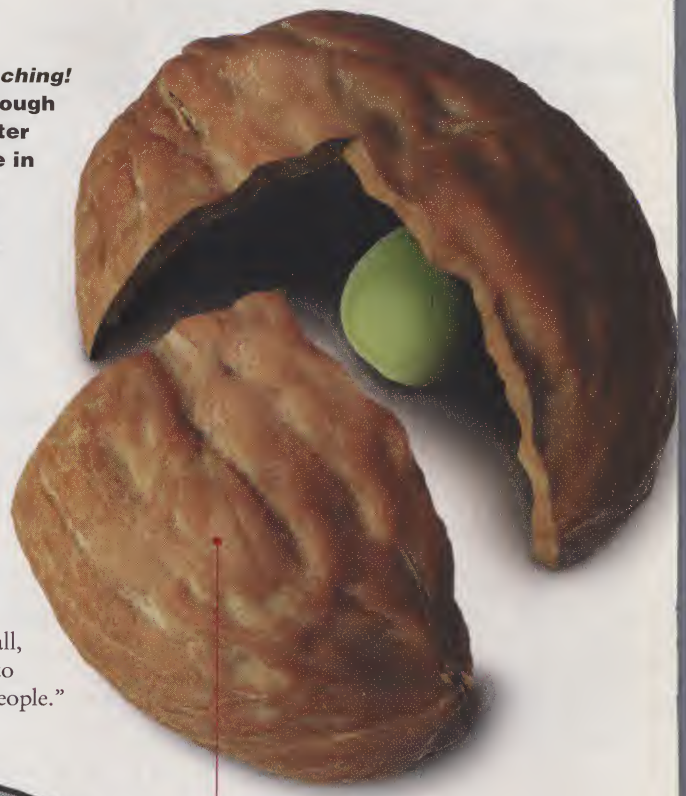
CSS

Have you ever bought anything on the Internet?

Ka-ching!

Sixty-six percent of you said yes. As if that weren't enough to put dollar signs in Internet merchants' eyes, Forrester Research predicts that $4.8 billion will be spent online in 1998—double last year's figure. And Forrester expects the total to top $17 billion by 2001. But beware: State governors want to impose a uniform, nationwide state tax on all online purchases.



What did you buy? Almost half of you (47 percent) buy computer hardware and software on the Internet; books and music CDs trail as the next most popular items. That mirrors trends among all online shoppers—not surprising in light of exceptional bargains and secure, hassle-free purchasing on sites like those of Dell Computer, CDW Computer Centers, and Amazon.com. Best of all, you said, you "don't have to deal with any pushy salespeople."

Were you satisfied? Internet shopping isn't all sweet deals and lightning-fast delivery. You told us about faulty products, computer glitches, bad customer service, and scams—like buying clubs that charge a joining fee and fold weeks later. But most of you remain unscathed: 83 percent have never experienced problems. And if it weren't for these drawbacks, more of you might have given online shopping an A grade. As it was, almost half gave it a solid B.

34% **Scam artists. Crooks. Credit card hackers. A paranoid one-third of you fear online shopping. Still, the rest of you aren't scared—or maybe you just like to shop naked.**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ELIZABETH BRANDT AND MARC ROSENTHAL

If you haven't shopped online, what would change your mind? Almost a third of you said you'd need bulletproof assurance that hackers couldn't lift your credit card info. But you sign receipts daily with these numbers printed right on them. What's to stop a desperate teenage clerk—or a calculating adult—from taking your number and heading for Peru? We wouldn't lie: Credit card transactions over secure servers are safe. For details, check out www.setco.org.

By Leslie Ayers

Enter next month's I-Poll at www.pccomputing.com

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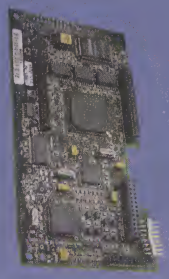

No purchase necessary to enter. Void where prohibited or restricted by law. Open to U.S. residents only. To enter, go to www.pccomputing.com. Entries must be received by May 25 for the Videonics prize; June 8 for the Matrox prize. Complete rules are available at www.pccomputing.com.

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***NEW* DELL® INSPIRON™ 3200 D266XT**
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- ★ **13.3" XGA Active Matrix TFT Display**
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- Modular 3.5" Floppy Disk Drive
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***NEW* DELL PRECISION™ WORKSTATION 410‡**
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- 512KB Integrated L2 Cache
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- 1600HS 21" (19.8" vis) Trinitron Monitor
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- 32X Max^ Variable EIDE CD-ROM Drive
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Common features listed above plus:
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DUAL PROCESSOR/RAID CAPABLE

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- 4GB Ultra-Wide SCSI-3 Hard Drive (Hot-Plug Optional)
- Intel Pro/100B PCI Ethernet Adapter
- 6 Expansion Slots: 4 PCI, 2 PCI/ISA
- Internal Hard Drive Bays to Support 4-1.6" or 6-1" Drives
- 3-Year NBD On-site^Δ Service
- 7x24 Dedicated Server Hardware Technical Telephone Support

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***NEW* DELL INSPIRON 3200 D266XT**
266MHz PENTIUM II PROCESSOR
FEATURING MMX TECHNOLOGY

Common features listed above plus:
- 13.3" XGA Active Matrix TFT Display
- 96MB SDRAM Memory
- *NEW* 6.4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- *NEW* Modular 2X DVD-ROM Drive and Decoder Card
- Leather Carrying Case
- MS Office 97 Small Business Edition
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- 6.9 Pounds*
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- ★ *56K Capable** x2 Modem, add $149.*

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***NEW* DELL INSPIRON 3200 D266XT**
266MHz PENTIUM II PROCESSOR
FEATURING MMX TECHNOLOGY

Common features listed above plus:
- 13.3" XGA Active Matrix TFT Display
- 64MB SDRAM Memory
- 4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive
- Modular 24X Max^^ Variable CD-ROM Drive
- 2nd Smart Lithium Ion Battery
- 3Com 3C575 10/100 Fast Ethernet Adapter
- Leather Carrying Case
- MS Office 97 Small Business Edition
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- 6.9 Pounds*

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Order Code #890507

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233MHz PENTIUM II PROCESSOR
FEATURING MMX TECHNOLOGY

Common features listed above plus:
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- 32MB SDRAM Memory
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WITH MMX TECHNOLOGY

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400MHz PENTIUM® II PROCESSOR
FEATURING MMX™ TECHNOLOGY

Common features listed above plus:
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- 32X Max^ Variable CD-ROM Drive
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- Altec Lansing ACS-90 Speakers

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NEW DELL DIMENSION XPS R350
350MHz PENTIUM II PROCESSOR
FEATURING MMX TECHNOLOGY

Common features listed above plus:
- 64MB 100MHz SDRAM Memory
- 11.5GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive (9.5ms) with Disk Performance Driver
- 1200HS 19" (17.9" vis, .26dp, 95 kHz) Monitor
- STB nVidia 4MB 3D AGP Video Card
- 2X DVD-ROM Drive and Decoder Card
- Turtle Beach Montego A3D 64 Voice PCI Sound Card
- Altec Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- ★ *Upgrade to 128MB SDRAM, add $169.*

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DELL DIMENSION XPS D333
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FEATURING MMX TECHNOLOGY

Common features listed above plus:
- 64MB SDRAM Memory
- 8.4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive (9.5ms)
- 1000LS 17" (15.9" vis) Monitor
- Diamond Permedia 2 8MB 3D AGP Video Card
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- Yamaha Wavetable Sound
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Business Lease◊: $83/Mo., 36 Mos.
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DELL DIMENSION XPS D233
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Common features listed above plus:
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DELL DIMENSION XPS R400
400MHz PENTIUM II PROCESSOR
FEATURING MMX TECHNOLOGY

Common features listed above plus:
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- *NEW* 16.8GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive (9.5ms) with Disk Performance Driver
- 1600HS 21" (19.8" vis, .26dp, 107 kHz, 1600 x 1200 max. res.) Trinitron Monitor
- STB nVidia 4MB 3D AGP Video Card
- 2X DVD-ROM Drive and Decoder Card
- Turtle Beach Montego A3D Sound Card
- Altec ACS-495 Full Dolby Surround Sound Speakers with Subwoofer
- Iomega Zip 100MB Internal Drive
- Dell QuietKey Keyboard

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FEATURING MMX TECHNOLOGY

Common features listed above plus:
- 64MB 100MHz SDRAM Memory
- 8.4GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive (9.5ms) with Disk Performance Driver
- 1200HS 19" (17.9" vis, .26dp, 95 kHz) Monitor
- Diamond 8MB 3D AGP Video Card
- 32X Max^ Variable CD-ROM Drive
- Turtle Beach Montego A3D Sound Card
- Altec ACS-495 Full Dolby Surround Sound Speakers with Subwoofer
- Iomega Zip 100MB Internal Drive
- Dell Comfort Key Keyboard

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Personal Lease°: $112/Mo., 36 Mos.
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DELL DIMENSION XPS R350
350MHz PENTIUM II PROCESSOR
FEATURING MMX TECHNOLOGY

Common features listed above plus:
- 64MB 100MHz SDRAM Memory
- 5.1GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive (9.5ms) with Disk Performance Driver
- 1000HS 17" (16.0" vis, .26dp, 85 kHz) Trinitron Monitor
- STB nVidia 4MB 3D AGP Video Card
- 32X Max^ Variable CD-ROM Drive
- Crystal Wavetable Sound
- Altec Lansing ACS-295 Speakers with Subwoofer
- Dell Comfort Key Keyboard

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DELL DIMENSION XPS D233
233MHz PENTIUM II PROCESSOR
FEATURING MMX TECHNOLOGY

Common features listed above plus:
- 64MB SDRAM Memory
- 4.3GB Ultra ATA Hard Drive (9.5ms)
- 800LS 15" (13.7" vis) Monitor
- STB nVidia 4MB 3D AGP Video Card
- 32X Max^ Variable CD-ROM Drive
- Yamaha Wavetable Sound
- Altec Lansing ACS-90 Speakers
- Dell Comfort Key Keyboard
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- Diamond Permedia 2 8MB 3D AGP Video Card
- 32X Max^ Variable CD-ROM Drive
- Turtle Beach Montego A3D 64 Voice PCI Sound Card
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- 56K Capable** U.S.R. x2 WinModem
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